

Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2025











EARLY PRINTERS AT WORK.



# THE STORY OF BOOKS

BY  
GERTRUDE BURFORD RAWLINGS



WITH SEVENTEEN ILLUSTRATIONS

NEW YORK  
McCLURE, PHILLIPS & CO.  
MCMIV

COPYRIGHT, 1901,  
By D. APPLETON AND COMPANY.

# CONTENTS.

---

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTORY . . . . .	9
II. THE PRESERVATION OF LITERATURE . . . . .	13
III. BOOKS AND LIBRARIES IN CLASSICAL TIMES . . . . .	25
IV. BOOKS IN MEDIÆVAL TIMES . . . . .	35
V. LIBRARIES IN MEDIÆVAL TIMES . . . . .	53
VI. THE BEGINNING OF PRINTING . . . . .	67
VII. WHO INVENTED MOVEABLE TYPES? . . . . .	77
VIII. GUTENBERG AND THE MENTZ PRESS . . . . .	84
IX. EARLY PRINTING . . . . .	98
X. EARLY PRINTING IN ITALY AND SOME OTHER COUNTRIES . . . . .	104
XI. EARLY PRINTING IN ENGLAND . . . . .	112
XII. EARLY PRINTING IN SCOTLAND . . . . .	124
XIII. EARLY PRINTING IN IRELAND . . . . .	131
XIV. BOOK BINDING . . . . .	136
XV. HOW A MODERN BOOK IS PRODUCED . . . . .	151
POSTSCRIPT . . . . .	156
INDEX . . . . .	157

## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

---

	PAGE
Early Printers at work . . . . .	<i>Frontispiece</i>
Page from the Book of Kells . . . . .	36
Part of Page from the Book of Kells . . . . .	37
Page from the Lindisfarne Gospels . . . . .	42
Page from the Biblia Pauperum . . . . .	72
Type of Mentz Indulgence . . . . .	90
Page from the Mazarin Bible . . . . .	93
Type of the Mazarin Bible . . . . .	94
Type of the Subiaco Lactantius . . . . .	105
Type of the Aldine Virgil, 1501 . . . . .	108
Type of Caxton's Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophres, Westminster, 1477 . . . . .	116
Boys Learning Grammar . . . . .	118
Caxton's Device . . . . .	120
Type of Wynken de Worde's Higden's Polychronicon, London, 1495 . . . . .	122
Myllar's Device . . . . .	125
Title Page of O'Kearney's Irish Alphabet and Cate- chism . . . . .	133
Upper Cover of Melissenda's Psalter . . . . .	141

# THE STORY OF BOOKS.

---

## CHAPTER I.

### INTRODUCTORY.

THE book family is a very old and a very noble one, and has rendered great service to mankind, although, as with other great houses, all its members are not of equal worth and distinction. But since books are so common nowadays as to be taken quite as matters of course, probably few people give any thought to the long chain of events which, reaching from the dim past up to our own day, has been necessary for their evolution. Yet if we look round on our bookshelves, whether we measure their contents by hundreds or by thousands, and consider how mighty is the power of these inanimate combinations of "rag-paper with black ink on them," and how all but limitless their field of action, it is but a step further to wonder what the first books were like. Given the living, working brain to fashion thoughts and create fancies, to whom did it first occur to write a book, what language and characters and material did he use, when did he write, and what did he write about? And although these questions can never be answered, an attempt to follow them up will lead the inquirer into many fascinating bye-ways of knowledge. It is not, however,

the purpose of these pages to deal at length with the ancient history of the *manuscript* book, but, after briefly noticing the chief links which connect the volumes of to-day with primeval records, to present to the reader a few of the many points of interest offered by the modern history of the *printed* book.

**The Beginning of Writing.**—Books began with writing, and writing began at the time when man first bethought himself to make records, so that the progenitor of the beautiful handwriting and no less beautiful print of the civilised world is to be looked for in the rude drawing which primeval man scratched with a pointed flint on a smooth bone, or on a rock, representing the beast he hunted, or perhaps himself, or one of his fellows. The exact degree of importance he attached to these drawings we cannot hope to discover. They may have been cherished from purely æsthetic motives, or they may have served, at times, a merely utilitarian end and acted, perhaps, as memoranda. However this may be, these early drawings are the germs from which sprang writing, the parent of books, and liberator of literature, that great force of which a book is but the vehicle. How these drawings were gradually changed into letters, in other words, the story of the alphabet, has been already told in this series by Mr. Edward Clodd, and therefore we need not deal further with the subject here.

Writing once learned, and alphabets once formulated, the machinery for making books, with the human mind as its mainspring, was fairly in motion. "Certainly the art of Writing," says Carlyle, "is the most miraculous of all things



man has devised. . . . With the art of Writing, of which Printing is a simple, an inevitable and comparatively insignificant corollary, the true reign of miracles for mankind commenced." That these words only express the feeling of our far away ancestors, a cursory glance into the mythology of various peoples will prove. For wherever there is a tradition respecting writing, that tradition almost invariably, if not always, connects the great invention with the gods or with some sacred person. The Egyptians attributed it to Thoth, the Babylonians and Assyrians to Nebo, the Buddhists to Buddha, the Greeks to Hermes. The Scandinavians honoured Odin as the first cutter of the mysterious runes, and the Irish derived their ogham from the sacred Ogma of the Tuatha de Danaan. And it is noteworthy how, from time immemorial, writing, and the making of books, have been considered high and honourable accomplishments, and how closely they have ever been connected with the holy functions of priesthood.

**Materials for Writing and Books.**—The early forms of books were various, and, to modern eyes, more or less clumsy. Wood or bark was one of the oldest substances used to receive writing. Stone was no doubt older still, but stone inscriptions are outside our subject. The early Greeks and Romans employed tablets of soft metal, and wooden leaves coated with wax, when they had anything to write, impressing the characters with a stylus. Thus Pausanius relates that he saw the original copy of Hesiod's *Works and Days* written on leaden tablets. The wooden leaves, when bound together at one side, foreshadowed

the form of book which is now almost universal, and were called by the Romans *caudex*, or *codex* (originally meaning a tree-stump), in distinction to the *volumen*, which was always a parchment or papyrus roll. The oldest manuscript in existence, however, is on papyrus, which, as is well known, was the chief writing-material of the ancient world. Although the discovery that skins of animals, when properly prepared, formed a convenient and durable writing-material, was made at a very early date, the papyrus held its own as the writing-material of literary Egypt, Greece, and Rome, until about the fourth or fifth century of our era.

The books of Babylonia and Assyria took the form of thick clay tablets of various sizes. The wedge-shaped characters they bore were made by impressing the wet, soft clay with a triangular-pointed instrument of wood, bone, or metal. The tablet was then baked, and as recent discoveries prove, rendered exceedingly durable. It is a matter of conjecture as to whether the form of the original documents of the Old Testament was that of the Babylonian tablets, or of the Egyptian papyrus rolls, or of rolls of parchment. Perhaps all three were employed by the various Biblical writers at different times.

It is stretching a point, perhaps, to include among writing-materials the tablets of bamboo bark which bore the earliest Chinese characters, since the inscriptions were carved. The Chinese, however, soon discarded such primitive uses, and the paper which is so indispensable to-day was invented by them at a very early date, though it remained unknown to Europe until the Arabs introduced it about the tenth century, A.D. One

of the earliest extant writings on paper is an Arabic "Treatise on the Nourishment of the Human Body," written in 960 A.D., but it seems to have been printing which really brought paper into fashion, for paper manuscripts are rare compared with those of parchment and vellum.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE PRESERVATION OF LITERATURE.

IT is easier to find the beginning of writing than the beginning of literature. Although we know for certain that the ancient nations of the world had books and libraries, that they preserved traditions, stored records and knowledge, and assisted memory by means of their tablets, their monuments, and their papyri, we shall probably never know when the art of writing was first applied to strictly literary purposes, and still less likely is it that we shall ever discover when works of the imagination were first recorded for the edification of mankind. It is not very rash, however, to assume that as soon as the art had developed the ancients put it to much the same uses as we do, except, perhaps, that they did not vulgarise it, and no one wrote who had not something to write about. But we are not without specimens of antique literatures. Egypt has preserved for us many different specimens of her literary produce of thousands of years ago—historical records, works of religion and philosophy, fiction, magic, and funeral ritual. Assyria has bequeathed to us hundreds of the clay books

which formed the great royal library at Nineveh, books of records, mythology, morals, grammar, astronomy, astrology, magic; books of reference, such as geographical tables, lists of temples, plants, birds, and other things. In the Old Testament we have all that now remains of Israelitish writings, and the early literatures of China and India are also partly known to us. After these the writings of Greece and Rome are of comparatively recent origin, and, moreover, they are nearer to us in other respects besides the merely chronological. The literature of Greece, dating from the far Homeric age, grew up a strong and beautiful factor in Greek life, and Rome, drawing first her alphabet and then her literature from the land before which she stooped, even while she conquered it, passed them on as an everlasting possession to the peoples of the western world. The fact of the literary pre-eminence of Greece partly helps to explain why Greek manuscripts form the bulk of the early writings now extant.

In considering how early literature has been preserved, therefore, we are hardly concerned with Egyptian papyri or cuneiform tablets, but with the writings of Greece and Rome, or writings produced under Greek or Roman influence. And it is curious that while the libraries and books of older nations have survived in comparatively large numbers, there should be no Greek literary manuscripts older than about 160 B.C., and even these are very fragmentary and scarce. The earliest Latin document known is dated 55 A.D., and is an unimportant wax tablet from Pompeii. For this lack of early documents many causes are responsible, and those who remember that it is not human beings only

who suffer from the vicissitudes inseparable from existence will wonder, not that we have so few ancient writings in our present possession, but that we have any. The evidence of many curious and interesting discoveries of manuscripts made from time to time goes to show that accident, rather than design, has worked out their preservation, and that the civilised world owes its present store of ancient literature more to good luck than good management, to use a handy colloquialism. It is true, of course, that in early days there were many who guarded books as very precious things, but in times of wars and tumults people would naturally give little thought to such superfluities. Fire and war have been the agencies most destructive of books, in the opinion of the author of *Philobiblon*, but carelessness and ignorance, wanton destruction and natural decay, are also accountable for some part of the great losses which have wasted so large a share of the literary heritage, and although we are deeply indebted to monastic work for the transmission of classic lore as well as of Christian compositions, we can hardly conclude that the monkish scribes wrote solely for the benefit of posterity. Their immediate purpose, no doubt, and naturally so, was much narrower, and identified the service of God with the enrichment of their houses. Besides, they did not hesitate to erase older writings in order that they might use the parchment again for their own, whenever it suited them to do so.

Before noting some of the ways by which ancient literature has come down to the present day, let us for a moment transport ourselves into the past, and see how a wealthy Roman lover of

letters would set about gathering a collection of books. Having no lack of means, all that is best in the literary world will be at his service. He will first take care that the works of every Greek writer which can possibly be obtained, as well as those of Roman authors, are represented in his library by well-written papyrus rolls containing good, correct texts. If he can obtain old manuscripts or original autographs of famous writers, so much the better ; but whereas ordinary volumes will cost him comparatively little, on these he must expend large sums. If a book on which he has set his heart is not to be purchased, he may be able to obtain the loan of it, so that it may be transcribed for him by his *librarius* or writing-slave. If he can neither borrow nor purchase what he desires, he may commission the bookseller to send for it to Alexandria, where there is an unrivalled store of books and many skilled scribes ready to make copies of them.

But it is not easy to estimate with any degree of certainty the quantity of literary material available, say, at the time of the establishment of the first public library in Rome, which was probably about 39 B.C. Books were common and booksellers flourished. Greek and Roman writings were preserved on papyrus, not neglected or lost, and the various parts of what we now call the Old Testament probably existed in the Hebrew synagogues. We may, perhaps, assume that the Roman book collector, did he choose to take the necessary trouble, might add to his collection some of the writings of ancient Egypt. But no doubt Greek and Latin authors only are of value in his eyes. At this point it is dangerous to speculate further, and we must leave the imagi-



nary Roman, and, advancing to our own time, where we are on surer ground, ask what remnants of old records and literature have come down to us, and how have they been preserved?

It will be disappointing news, perhaps, to those to whom the facts are fresh, that no original manuscript of any classical author, and no original manuscript of any part of the Bible, Old Testament or New, has yet come to light. Nothing is known of any of these documents except through the medium of copies, and in some cases very many copies indeed intervene between us and the original. For instance, the oldest Homeric manuscript known, with the exception of one or two fragments, is not older than the first century B.C., and the most ancient Biblical manuscript known, a fragment of a Psalter, is assigned to the late third or early fourth century A.D. The earliest New Testament manuscript extant, the first leaf of a book of St. Matthew's Gospel, is also no older than the third century. It is curious, too, that no ancient Greek manuscripts have been found either in Greece or Italy excepting some rolls discovered in the ruins of Herculaneum. One reason for this is no doubt the fact that when Roman armies assailed Athens and other Greek cities they despoiled them not only of their statues and works of art, but of their books as well. These went to furnish the libraries of Rome, though it is probable that certain of them found their way back to Greece in company with some of Rome's own literary produce when Constantine set up his capital and founded a library at Byzantium. Another means by which Greek manuscripts left the country was afforded by the eagerness of Ptolemy II. to extend the great

library of Alexandria, to which end he bought books in all parts of Greece, and particularly in Athens and Rhodes.

The Roman libraries did not survive the onslaughts of the barbarians, who seem to have carried out a very thorough work of destruction in the Eternal City. But it is not unlikely that in some cases books, among other portable treasures, were carried away when their owners sought refuge in less troubled localities, such as Constantinople or Alexandria. Still, the fact remains that the contents of the Roman libraries have disappeared, and that for the ancient manuscripts now in our possession we are indebted to the tombs, the temples, the monasteries, and the sands of Egypt. Sometimes—to show the strange adventures of some of these manuscripts—the cartonnage cases in which mummies of the later period were enclosed, were made of papyrus documents, which apparently had been treated as waste paper and put to all sorts of undignified uses. The two oldest classical papyri known, consisting of fragments of Plato's *Phædo* and of the *Antiope* of Euripides, were recovered from mummy-cases, and are supposed to date from the third century B.C. Other important Greek texts which have been preserved by Egypt are Aristotle's *Constitution of Athens*, the *Mimes* of Herodas, the *Odes* of Bacchylides, the *Gospel* and *Apocalypse* of Peter, the Book of Enoch, &c.

But here we have to take into consideration a new and important factor in literary as in other matters—the spread of Christianity. With such obvious exceptions as the cuneiform records, or the Egyptian writings, and similar remains, the bulk of the manuscripts (as manuscripts, not as

compositions) is the work of (Christian) religious houses, and it is easy to see that we owe much to the labours of the monks and ecclesiastics who have transmitted to us not only the earliest and most valuable works of the Church's own writers, but also the chief part of the literature of Greece and Rome. As Mr. Falconer Madan says in his *Books in Manuscript*, "the number and importance of the MSS. of Virgil and the four Gospels is greater than of any other ancient authors whatever," and it is safe to assume that all these Gospel MSS., and perhaps all the Virgil MSS. also, were the handiwork of churchmen.

As an example of the manuscript treasures yielded by Egypt may be instanced the find at Behnesa, a village standing on the site of the Roman city of Oxyrhynchus, one of the chief centres of early Christianity in Egypt. Here, in 1896, Mr. B. P. Grenfell and Mr. A. S. Hunt, searching for papyri on behalf of the Egypt Exploration Fund, lighted upon one of the richest hunting-grounds yet discovered. The result of their excavations was that about 270 boxes of manuscripts were brought to England, while 150 of the best rolls were left at the Cairo Museum. I am unable to give the size of the boxes, but Professor Flinders Petrie's statement that "the publication of this great collection of literature and documents will probably occupy a decade or two, and will place our knowledge of the Roman and early Christian age on a new footing," will testify to the extent and importance of the find.

In this collection the document which excited most interest was a papyrus leaf bearing some

scraps of Greek, to which the name of ΛΟΓΙΑ ΙΗΣΟΥ, or Sayings of our Lord, has been given. This leaf is at present assigned to a date between 150 and 300 A.D. The Logia are eight in number, and while three of them are closely similar to certain passages in the Gospels, the rest are new. Another valuable document was the fragment of St. Matthew's Gospel alluded to above, which, written in the third century, is a hundred years older than any New Testament manuscript hitherto known. Classical documents also were found in great numbers, and included a new *Ode* of Sappho, which, however, is unfortunately imperfect. It was transcribed probably about the third century A.D.

Many Coptic, Syriac, and Arabic manuscripts have been recovered from the numerous monasteries of Palestine, Asia Minor, and Egypt. Several travellers who have managed to overcome the suspicion of the monks and their unwillingness to open their literary hoards to strangers, or to part with any of the volumes, have found immense numbers of books hidden under dust and rubbish in vaults and cellars or stowed away in chests, where they were probably thrust at some time when danger threatened them. Books written in these monasteries themselves in earlier days, or brought thither from other monasteries further east, have thus lain forgotten or neglected for centuries, or, if they were noticed at all, it was only that they might be put to some ignoble use. Thus some were found acting as covers to two large jars which had formerly held preserves. "I was allowed to purchase these vellum manuscripts," says the author of *Monasteries of the Levant*, "as they were considered to be useless

by the monks, principally, I believe, because there were no more preserves in the jars." In another case some large volumes were found in use as footstools to protect the bare feet of the monks from the cold stone floor of their chapel.

As we have already seen, Christian scribes not only preserved the writings of the Fathers of the Church, as well as the Holy Scriptures, but also directed much of their attention to the classic works of poetry and philosophy. In every monastery from Ireland to Asia Minor, from Seville to Jerusalem, the work of transcribing and transmitting sacred and secular literature was carried on, and had we at the present day one half of the fruits of this labour we should be rich indeed. But we have also seen that many causes have contributed to the destruction of old writings, of which carelessness and ignorance are by no means the least. The well-known story of Tischendorf's discovery of the oldest copy of the New Testament in existence,\* in a basket of fuel at a monastery near Mount Sinai is but a single example, and that a modern one, of the dangers to which these ancient books were liable, and to which they too often fell victims. The danger was long ago recognised, however, and a canon of the third Council of Constantinople, held in 719 A.D., enacted "That nobody whatever be allowed to injure the book of the Old and New Testament, or those of our holy preachers and doctors, nor to cut them up, nor to give them to dealers in books, or perfumers, or any other person to be erased, except they have been rendered useless by moths or water or in some other way. He

---

\* The Codex Sinaiticus, now at St. Petersburg.

who shall do any such thing shall be excommunicated for one year." The same Council also ordered the burning of heretical books.

With the revival of learning in the fourteenth century there came an awakened interest in ancient writings. They were eagerly sought for in the monasteries of Europe, and the learned of Italy were especially instrumental in recovering the neglected classical works. It has been said that almost all the classical authors were discovered or rediscovered either in Italy or through the researches of Italians. Petrarch, with whose name the Renaissance is inseparably associated, and a contemporary of Richard de Bury, took great pains to form a collection of the works of Cicero, whose *Epistles* he was fortunate enough to rescue from destroying oblivion. He tells us that when he met strangers, and they asked him what he desired from their country, he would reply, "Nothing, but the works of Cicero." He also sent money to France, Germany, Spain, Greece, and England that these books might be bought for him, and if while travelling he came across any ancient monastery he would turn aside and explore its book treasures.

Poggio Bracciolini, a learned Italian of the fifteenth century, has also made himself famous by his ardent pursuit of the remains of classical literature, and by aiding the interest in them which the Renaissance had awakened. He searched Europe for manuscripts to such a good purpose that he unearthed a valuable text of Quintilian's *Institutes*, "almost perishing at the bottom of a dark neglected tower," in the monastery of St. Gall, and recovered many other classical writings by his industry, including some



of the *Orations* of Cicero; Lucretius; Manilius, and others. He also rescued the writings of Tertullian.

We may perhaps believe that even by this time the surviving treasures of the old storehouses of literature have not yet been all brought to light. Renan discovered in the large collection of manuscripts still preserved in the monastery of Monte Casino in Italy, some unpublished pages of Abelard's *Theologia Christiana*, and other valuable finds besides, and it is quite possible that many more surprises are awaiting an enterprising and diligent searcher.

But although the monasteries had so large a share in the work of the preservation of literature, the monks themselves wrought harm as well as good, for in their zeal to record sacred compositions they frequently destroyed older and often more valuable documents by scraping off the original writing and substituting other. This was done for economy's sake, when writing material was costly, and parchments thus treated are known as palimpsests. Owing to this reprehensible practice, many literary treasures have been irretrievably lost. Our Anglo-Saxon literature, for instance, is not represented by any contemporary copies. The Anglo-Norman writers had a contempt for the old English manuscripts, and turned them into palimpsests without the slightest idea that there could be any value in them, and attached far more importance to the writing they themselves were about to make. Thus it happens that we are in the same position with regard to Anglo-Saxon literature as with regard to classical authors. No original documents exist, and it is known to us solely through copies, single copies,

in most cases. Beowulf, for instance, is represented only by a manuscript of the first half of the eleventh century, and Caedmon by a manuscript of the tenth century.

With the invention and spread of the knowledge of printing, however, the risk of loss was greatly reduced. Such ancient writings as came into the printer's hands were given a fresh lease of life which in many cases was of indefinite length, or rather, of practically eternal duration. But the fact of being printed was not invariably a safeguard. Some of the works of the early printers have disappeared completely, and many are represented only by single copies. The strange history of the British Museum copy of the famous *Book of St. Albans*, will serve to show the vicissitudes with which the relics of the past have to contend in their journey down the ages.

At the end of the last century the library of an old Lincolnshire house was overhauled by someone who disdainfully turned out of it all unbound books, and had them destroyed. A few of the condemned books, however, were begged by the gardener. Among them was the *Book of St. Albans*. At the gardener's death his son threw away some of the rescued volumes, but kept the "Book." At the son's death, his widow sold such books as he had left, to a pedlar, for the sum of ninepence. The pedlar re-sold them to a chemist in Gainsborough for shop-paper, but observing the strange wood-cuts in the "Book," the chemist offered it to a stationer for a guinea. The stationer would not purchase, but said he would display it in his window as a curiosity. Here it attracted attention, and five pounds was offered for it by a gentleman in the neighbour-

hood. The stationer, finding the volume an object of desire, gave the chemist two pounds for it and eventually sold it to a bookseller for seven guineas. Of this bookseller the Right Hon. Thomas Grenville bought it for seventy pounds, and bequeathed it to the British Museum with the rest of his magnificent library. This story I give on the authority of Mr. Blades, who also, to instance the way in which books travel about and turn up in odd places, relates that a brother of Bishop Heber's, who had been for years seeking for a book printed by Colard Mansion, but without success, one day received a fine copy from the bishop, who had bought it from a native on the banks of the Ganges.

### CHAPTER III.

#### BOOKS AND LIBRARIES IN CLASSICAL TIMES.

IN literary Greece and Rome, so far as we can tell from the somewhat meagre information handed down to us, literature was pursued for her own sake, and filthy lucre did not enter into the calculations of authors, who appear to have been satisfied if their works met with the approval of those who were competent to judge of them. Literature walked alone, and had not as yet entered into partnership with commerce. The writing of books for pecuniary profit is a wholly modern development, and even now it is more often an aspiration than a realisation.

In those days, when an author desired to make known a work, he would read it aloud to

an invited party of friends. This reading of original compositions became in time a common item of the programme provided by a host for the entertainment of his guests, and it is not difficult to imagine that such a custom was often subjected to grave abuse, from the guests' point of view. Later, the private reading developed into the public lecture. Lectures of this kind became very frequent in Rome, and we are told that it was looked upon as a sort of festival when a fashionable author announced a reading. But we are also told that some of the audience often treated a lecturer of mediocre merit with scant courtesy, entering late and leaving early, and frequently they who applauded most were those who had listened least. The public reading is recorded of a poem composed by Nero. It was read to the people on the Capitol, and the manuscript, which was written in letters of gold, was afterwards deposited in the temple of Jupiter Capitolinus.

If a work happened to attract attention by reason of its author's reputation or its own merit, it was copied by students or others who had heard and admired it. This was the only way in which literary productions could be dispersed and made known to the public at large, or a collection of books be gathered together. As the literary taste developed, those who were sufficiently wealthy kept slaves whose sole business it was to copy books, which books might be either the original works of their master, who by this means disseminated his compositions, or the works of others, for the benefit of their master's library. These slaves, being of necessity well educated and skilful scribes, were purchased at

high prices and held in great esteem by their owners. But obviously it was only the rich who could command such service, and ordinary folk had to resort to the bookseller.

The booksellers of Athens and Rome were those who made copies of books, or employed slaves to make them, and sold or let them on hire to those who had need of them. The author had no voice in these matters. There was nothing to prevent anyone who borrowed or otherwise got possession of his work from making copies of the manuscript if he chose, and making money from the copies if he could. "Copyright" was a word unknown in those days, and for centuries after. The booksellers advertised their wares by notices affixed to the door-posts of their shops, giving the names of new or desirable works, and sometimes read these works aloud to their friends and patrons. Their shops were favourite places of resort for persons of leisure and literary tastes.

Copyists of books retained a high place in the order of things literary until the introduction of printing, and without their labours we should know nothing of ancient literature, seeing that no original manuscript of any classical author has survived. And apart from its purely literary value, which is variable, the work of the early mediæval scribes in many instances reaches a high artistic standard, and exhibits marvellous skill in an accomplishment now numbered among the lost arts.

On the subjects of libraries, as on all literary matters in ancient times, hardly any solid information is available. But we know that Egypt was to the fore in this respect as in so many others. Yet of all the collections of books which,

since they are frequently alluded to in the inscriptions, she undoubtedly possessed, stored in her kings' palaces and her temple archives, there is only one which is mentioned in history, and that by a single historian. According to Diodorus Siculus, this library was made by Osymandyas, who was king of Egypt at a date which has not been precisely determined. He tells us that its entrance exhibited the inscription: "Place of Healing for the Soul," or, as it has been variously rendered, "Balsam for the Soul," or, "Dispensary of the Mind." Although doubt has been thrown on the perfect accuracy of the historian in introducing the name of Osymandyas in this connection, modern Egyptologists have identified the plan of the library with a hall of the great "palace temple" of Rameses II., the "Ramesium" or "Memnonium" at Thebes. The door-jambs of this hall utter their own testimony to its ancient use, for they bear the figures of Thoth, the god of writing, and Saf, a goddess who is accompanied by the titles "Lady of Letters" and "Presider over the Hall of Books." Astle, in *The Origin and Progress of Writing*, says that the books and colleges of Egypt were destroyed by the Persians, but Matter, on the other hand, in *L'École d'Alexandrie*, declares that the temple archives were in existence in the Greek and Roman periods. Probably Astle's statement is not intended to be as sweeping as it appears.

Babylonia and Assyria also had their libraries. According to Professor Sayce (*The Higher Criticism and the Monuments*) they were "filled with libraries, and the libraries with thousands of books." The royal library already referred to as furnishing so rich a treasure of cuneiform tablets,

was begun by Sennacherib, who reigned 705-681 B.C., and completed by Assur-bani-pal, who reigned about 668-626 B.C.

There were libraries, too, in Palestine, in early days, but we know nothing of them. They may have been archives or places where records were kept, rather than libraries as we understand the term. The name of Kirjath-sepher, a city near Hebron, means "city of books," and survives from pre-Israelitish times. By the Jews, records and "the book of the law" were preserved in the temple.

Almost as scanty are the accounts of the libraries of ancient Greece. The tyrant Pisistratus, 537-527 B.C., has been credited, traditionally, with the establishment in Athens of the first public library, but although he encouraged letters and the preservation of literature there is no good reason for accepting the tradition as authentic.

But of all libraries those of Alexandria were the largest and most celebrated, and yet, notwithstanding their eminence, the accounts relating to them are confused and contradictory. Alexandria, which, although situated in Egypt, was a Greek and not an Egyptian city, was founded by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C., and rapidly rose to a high position. Its buildings, its learning, its luxury, and its books, became world-famous. The first library was established by Ptolemy Soter, a ruler of literary tastes, about 300 B.C., and was situated in that part of the city known as the Bruchium. Copyists were employed to transcribe manuscripts for the benefit of the institution, and it is said that under Ptolemy Euergetes all books brought into Egypt were seized and sent to the library to be transcribed. The copies were re-

turned to the owners, whose wishes were evidently not consulted, in place of the originals, which went to enrich the store in the great library.

Ptolemy Philadelphus is said to have supplemented Soter's library by another, which was lodged in the Temple of Serapis, but it has been conjectured, with more probability, that the Serapeum collection began with the temple archives, to which the Ptolemies made additions from time to time; these additions, as some have affirmed, including part of Aristotle's library. But here, also, contradictions are encountered, and it seems impossible to say exactly whether this statement refers to Aristotle's autograph writings, or to copies of them, or to manuscripts of other authors' works formerly in his possession.

It was Ptolemy Philadelphus, we are told by Galen, who gave the Athenians fifteen talents, a great convoy of provisions, and exemption from tribute, in exchange for the autographs and originals of the tragedies of Æschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides.

Two other libraries also helped to make up the glory of Alexandria; one in the Sebasteum, or Temple of Augustus, and one in connection with the Museum. The latter, however, was a much later foundation. The museum or university itself had been instituted by Ptolemy Soter, and though it was quite distinct from the library which is associated with his name, there was doubtless some relationship between the two. Her museum and libraries, and the encouragement she offered to learning, combined to set Alexandria at the head of the literary world, and to make her "the first great seat of literary Hellenism" (Jebb). She was also the centre of the book industry, that is,



of the reproduction of books, as distinguished from their first production. This was owing in a large measure to the number of professional copyists attracted by the facilities afforded to them, and to the fact that the papyrus trade had its headquarters here.

Another famous library of this period was that of the Kings of Pergamus, founded by Attalus I., who reigned from 241 to 197 B.C. Between Pergamus and Alexandria there was vigorous competition. In the end, however, Alexandria had the satisfaction of seeing her rival completely humbled, for Antony presented the books of Pergamus, stated to have been about two hundred thousand in number, to Cleopatra, who added them to Alexandria's treasures. At least, so says Plutarch, but Plutarch's authority for the statement was Calvisius, whose veracity was not above suspicion.

How the enormous accumulation of manuscripts gathered by Alexandria came to perish so utterly is not clear. The Romans accidentally fired the Bruchium when they reduced the city, but according to several accounts there were still a goodly number of books remaining at the time of the Saracen invasion in 638 A.D. The story of the Caliph Omar's reply to a plea for the preservation of the books is well known. "If they contain anything contrary to the word of God," he is reported to have said, "they are evil; if not, they are superfluous," and forthwith he had them distributed among the four thousand baths of the city, which they provided with fuel for six months. But several authorities doubt this story, and assert that long before Omar's time the Alexandrian libraries had ceased to exist.

Though very far from being as full as could be wished, the accounts of libraries in Rome are more numerous than any relating to libraries in other parts of the ancient world. Besides the collections of books made by private persons, which in one or two instances were generously opened to the public by the owner, there were the imperial libraries, and the more strictly public libraries. Among the emperors whose names are especially associated with the gathering and preservation of books are Augustus, Tiberius and Trajan. Julius Cæsar had formed a scheme for the establishment of a public library, but it is not clear whether it was ever carried out or no. Domitian, to replace the library in the Capitol, which had been destroyed, sent scholars abroad to collect manuscripts and to copy some of those at Alexandria. Under Constantine the Roman public libraries numbered twenty-nine, and were very frequently lodged in the temples.

Last in point of date come the libraries of Byzantium, the city which the Emperor Constantine in 330 A.D. made the capital of the eastern portion of the empire, and named after himself. He at once began to gather books there, and his successors followed his example. Thus various libraries were established, and those which survived the fires which occurred from time to time in the city, existed until its capture by the Turks in 1452. On this occasion, and also after the assault by the Crusaders in 1203, the libraries probably suffered. It is said, too, by some that Leo III. wantonly destroyed a large number of books, but the assertion cannot be proved. Among the lost treasures of Constantinople was "the only authentic copy" of the proceedings of the Coun-

cil of Nice, held in 325 A.D. to deal with the Arian heresy.

The ultimate fate of the imperial library at Constantinople yet remains a problem. Some are of opinion that it was destroyed by Amurath IV., and that none but comparatively unimportant Arabic and other Oriental manuscripts make up the Sultan's library. Some believe that, in spite of repeated assertions to the contrary on the part of Turkish officials and others, there somewhere lies a secret hoard, neglected and uncared for, perhaps, but nevertheless existent, of ancient and valuable Greek manuscripts. The Seraglio has usually been considered to be the repository of this hoard, and access to the Seraglio is very difficult and almost impossible to obtain. In the year 1800 Professor Carlyle, during his travels in the East, took enormous pains and used every means in his power to reach the bottom of the mystery surrounding the Seraglio treasures. He was assured by every Turkish officer whom he consulted on the subject that no Greek manuscripts existed there; and when by dint of influence in high quarters and much patience and perseverance he at length gained permission to examine the Seraglio library, he found that it consisted chiefly of Arabic manuscripts, and contained not a single Greek, Latin, or Hebrew writing. The library, or such part of it as the Professor was shown, was approached through a mosque, and consisted of a small cruciform chamber, measuring only twelve yards at its greatest width. One arm of the cross served as an ante-chamber, and the other three contained the book-cases. The books were laid on their sides, one on the other, the ends outward.

Their titles were written on the edges of the leaves.

The result of the professor's researches went to confirm the belief held by so many that no Greek manuscripts had survived. On the other hand, the jealousy and suspicion of the Turks would render it at least possible that despite the apparent straightforwardness with which Mr. Carlyle was treated, there were stores of manuscripts which were kept back from him.

A final touch of mystery was given to this fascinating subject by a tradition concerning a certain building in Constantinople which had been closed up ever since the time of the Turkish conquest in the fifteenth century. Of the existence of this building Professor Carlyle was certain. The tradition asserted that it contained many of the former possessions of the Greek emperors, and among these possessions Professor Carlyle expected that the remains of the imperial library would be found, if such remains existed.

Of other libraries of olden times, such as those of Antioch and Ephesus, or those in private possession in the country houses of Italy and Gaul, and which perished at the hands of the barbarians, it is not necessary to speak more fully. It is sufficient to point out that they existed, and that though we possess few details as to their furniture or arrangement, we are justified in concluding that the latter, at any rate, were luxuriously appointed. It must not be inferred, however, that all the books which disappeared from these various centres were of necessity destroyed. Many, and particularly some of the Byzantine manuscripts, were dispersed over Europe, and survive to enrich our libraries and museums of to-day.

## CHAPTER IV.

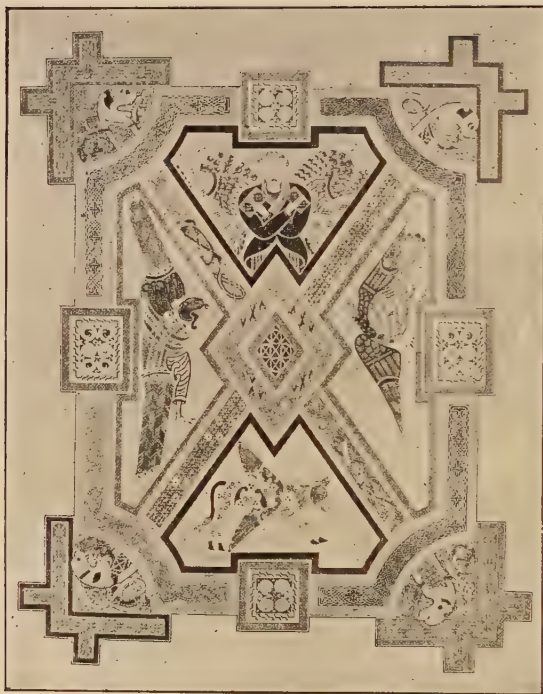
## BOOKS IN MEDIÆVAL TIMES.

THE books of the Middle Ages are a special subject in themselves, since they include all the illuminated manuscripts of Ireland, England and the Continent. We can therefore do little more than indicate their historical place in the story of books.

We have only to look at a mediæval illuminated manuscript to understand how books were regarded in those days, and with what lavish expenditure of time and skill the quaint characters were traced and the ornaments designed and executed. And having looked, we gather that books, being rare, were appreciated; and being sacred, were revered; and that it was deemed a worthy thing to make a good book and to make it beautiful. Sometimes the monkish artist's handiwork had a result not foreseen by him, for we read that when St. Boniface, the Saxon missionary who gave his life to the conversion of Germany, wrote to ask the Abbess Eadburga for a missal, he desired that the colours might be gay and bright, "even as a glittering lamp and an illumination for the hearts of the Gentiles." It is easy to imagine how the brilliant pages would attract the colour-loving barbarians, and prepare the way for friendly advances.

It is probable that the custom of ornamenting books with drawings was derived from the Egyptians by the Greeks, and from the Greeks by the Romans, among whom decorated books were common, although they are known to us chiefly

by means of copies preserved in Byzantine and Italian manuscripts of a more recent period. These, and a few examples dating from the time of Con-



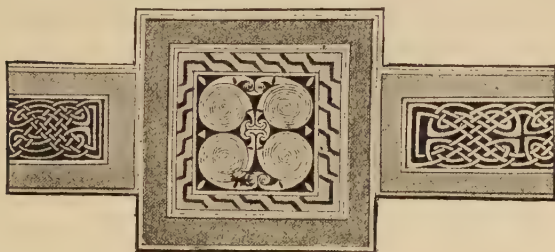
Page from the Book of Kells (reduced).

stantine, exhibit a style evidently derived from classical models.

A survey of mediæval books properly begins with the early Irish manuscripts, which stand at

the head of a long and glorious line stretching, chronologically, from the seventh century of our era to the fifteenth. Although it is not known where the art was born to which these wonderful productions of Celtic pen-craft owe their origin, it is Ireland, nevertheless, which has provided us with the earliest and finest examples of this work, the marvels of skill and beauty which, summed up, as it were, in the Book of Kells, the Book of Durrow, and others, set the Irish manuscripts beyond imitation or rivalry.

Most of these books are Psalters, or Gospels, in Latin, while the remainder consist of missals and other religious compilations, and of them all the Book of Kells is the most famous. It was written in the seventh century, and probably indicates the



Part of page from the Book of Kells (exact size).

highest point of skill reached by the Irish artist-scribes, or as regards its own particular style of ornamentation, by any artist-scribes whatever. It is a book of the Gospels written (in Latin) on vellum, and the size of the volume, of the writing, and of the initial letters is unusually large. The leaves measure  $13\frac{1}{2} \times 9\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The illustrations represent various incidents in the life of Christ,



and portraits of the Evangelists, accompanied by formal designs. Ornamentation is largely introduced into the text, and the first few words of each Gospel are so lavishly decorated and have initial letters of such size that in each case they occupy the whole of a page.

The book just described was preserved at Kells until the early part of the seventeenth century. It then passed into Archbishop Ussher's possession, and finally into the library of Trinity College, Dublin, where it is now treasured.

Of course it is impossible to give here a reproduction of a page of this marvellous book in its proper size and colours. Our illustrations, however, may convey a little idea of the accuracy and minuteness of the work, which, it is hardly necessary to say, was done entirely by hand, and will serve as a text for a brief summary of the chief features of Irish book art. The design here shown is composed of a diagonal cross set in a rectangular frame, having in each angle a symbol of one of the four Evangelists. The colours in this design, as reproduced by Professor Westwood in his *Miniatures and Ornaments of Anglo-Saxon and Irish Manuscripts*, principally consist of red, dark and light mauve, green, yellow, and blue-grey. The animals depicted are quaint, but not ridiculous, and the figure of St. Matthew, in the upper angle of the cross, though stiff and ungraceful, is less peculiar than other figures in the book. The Irish artist was always more successful in designing and executing geometrical systems of ornamentation than in representing living figures.

The interlacing, which forms a large part of the design under consideration, is a characteristic of Celtic work. The regularity with which the



bands pass under and over, even in the most complicated patterns, is very remarkable, and errors are rarely to be detected. The spirals which occupy the four panels at the ends and sides of the frame are also typical of this school of art. The firmness and accuracy of their drawing testify to the excellent eyesight as well as to the steady hand and technical skill of the artist.

The prevailing feature of Celtic ornament as shown in illuminated manuscripts is the geometrical nature of the designs. The human figure when introduced into the native Irish books is absurdly grotesque, for its delineation seems to have been beyond the artist's skill, or, more correctly, to have lain in another category, and to have belonged to a style distinct from that in which he excelled. At a later period, figure drawing became a marked characteristic of English decorated manuscripts, and English artists attained to a high degree of skill in this branch of their art.

Bright colours were employed in the Irish manuscripts, but gold and silver are conspicuous by their absence, and did not appear in the manuscripts of these islands until Celtic art had been touched by continental influence.

The tradition that the Book of Kells was written by the great St. Columba himself, reminds us that at this period nearly all books were the handiwork of monks and ecclesiastics, and in all monasteries the transcribing of the Scriptures and devotional works was part of the established order of things. Columba, we know, was a famous scribe, and took great pleasure in copying books. He is said to have transcribed no less than three hundred volumes, and all books writ-

ten by him were believed to be miraculously preserved from danger by water. As an instance of this, Adamnan relates the following story:—

“A book of hymns for the office of every day in the week, and in the handwriting of St. Columba, having slipt, with the leathern satchel which contained it, from the shoulder of a boy who fell from a bridge, was immersed in a certain river in the province of the Lagenians (Leinster). This very book lay in the water from the Feast of the Nativity of our Lord till the end of the Paschal season, and was afterwards found on the bank of the river” uninjured, and as clean and dry as if it had never been in the water at all. “And we have ascertained as undoubted truth,” continues Adamnan, “from those who were well informed in the matter, that the like things happened in several places with regard to books written by the hand of St. Columba;” and he adds that the account just given he received from “certain truthful, excellent, and honourable men who saw the book itself, perfectly white and beautiful, after a submersion of so many days, as we have stated.”

By Irish missionaries the art of book writing was taught to Britain, chiefly through the school of Lindisfarne, where was produced the famous Lindisfarne Gospels, or book of St. Cuthbert. This magnificent work, which is one of the choicest treasures of the British Museum, was as highly esteemed by its contemporaries as by ourselves, though perhaps not for quite the same reasons. Tradition has it that when Lindisfarne was threatened by the Northmen and the monks had to fly, they took with them the body of St. Cuthbert, in obedience to his dying behest, and this book. They attempted to seek refuge in

Ireland, but their boat had scarcely reached the open sea when it met a storm so violent that through the pitching of the little vessel the book fell overboard. Sorrowfully they put back, but during the night St. Cuthbert appeared to one of the monks and ordered him to seek for the book in the sea. On beginning their search, they found that the tide had ebbed much further than it was wont to do, and going out about three miles they came upon the holy book, not a whit the worse for its misadventure. "By this," says the old historian, "were their hearts refreshed with much joy." And the book was afterwards named in the priory rolls as "the Book of St. Cuthbert, which fell into the sea."

This notable volume is an excellent example of Celtic book art in the beginning of its transition stage, a stage which marks the approach to the two schools which were the result of the combination of Celtic and continental influences in the hands of intelligent and skilful Anglo-Saxon scribes—the Hiberno-Saxon and the English schools. It contains the four Gospels written in Latin, and arranged in double columns, each Gospel being preceded by a full-page formal design of Celtic work and a full-page portrait of the Evangelist. The conjunction of these two distinct styles of ornament forms one of the chief points of interest in the book. The formal designs of interlaced, spiral, and key patterns, so characteristic of Celtic work, show its near kinship to the Irish books, while the portraits prove an almost equally close connection with Roman and Byzantine models. There is reason to believe that the classical element is due to the influence of an Italian or Byzantine book or books

brought to Lindisfarne by Theodore, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his friend Adrian, an Italian abbot, when the archbishop visited the island for the purpose of consecrating Aidan's church.



Page from the Lindisfarne Gospels (reduced).

The Lindisfarne Gospels accompanied St. Cuthbert's body to Durham in 995, but rather more than a century later was restored to Lindisfarne, and remained there until the monastery

which had replaced St. Aidan's foundation was dissolved at the Reformation. It is then lost sight of until it reappears in the famous Cotton Library, with which it is now possessed by the nation.

The English school of illumination had its chief seat at Winchester. Its work is characterised by its figure drawing, and while the foliage ornament introduced, together with the gold which was largely used in the Winchester manuscripts, indicate continental influence, the interlaced and other patterns are derived from the Irish school. Of this class of manuscript the Benedictional of Æthelwold, in the Duke of Devonshire's library, may serve as a typical example. It was written for Æthelwold, Bishop of Winchester, by his chaplain Godemann, towards the end of the tenth century. Were it practicable to offer the reader a reproduction of one of its pages, it would be seen that it exactly illustrates what has just been said. Its figure drawing and foliated ornamentation are among its most striking features.

The Norman Conquest opened up the English school of art more widely to continental influence, with the result that towards the end of the thirteenth and beginning of the fourteenth centuries the English manuscripts were unsurpassed by any in Europe. As a typical specimen of the illuminations of this period, we may with propriety select one which has been described by Sir Edward Maunde Thompson as "the very finest of its kind," and "probably unique in its combination of excellence of drawing, brilliance of illumination, and variety and extent of subjects." It is a Psalter dating from the fourteenth century, and known as Queen Mary's Psalter, because a

customs officer of the port of London, who intercepted it as it was about to be taken out of the country, presented it to the Queen in 1553. This magnificent book is now in the British Museum.

During the twelfth and thirteenth centuries a large number of Bibles and Psalters were written, and made up the greater part of the book output of the larger monasteries, to which we are indebted for all our fine pieces of manuscript work. Indeed, most of the decorated manuscripts of this period are occupied with the Scriptures, services, liturgies, and other matters of the kind, and on such the best work was lavished. Later, however, the growing taste for romances and stories induced a corresponding tendency to decorate these secular manuscripts too, and some very fine work of this class was produced, especially in France. The books of the chronicles of England and of France, written in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, were also largely adorned with painted miniatures.

Nearly all the writing of Europe was done in the religious houses. In most of the larger monasteries there was a scriptorium, or writing-room, where Bibles, Psalters, and service books, and patristic and classical writings were transcribed, chronicles and histories compiled, and beautiful specimens of the illuminator's art carefully, skilfully, and lovingly executed.

Books, however, were not only written in the monasteries, but read as well. The rule of St. Benedict insisted that the steady reading of books by the brethren should form part of the daily round. Archbishop Lanfranc, also, in his orders for the English Benedictines, directed that once a year books were to be distributed and borrowed

volumes to be restored. For this purpose, the librarian was to have a carpet laid down in the Chapter House, the monks were to assemble, and the names of those to whom books had been lent were to be read out. Each in turn had to answer to his name, and restore his book, and he who had neglected to avail himself of his privilege, and had left his book unread, was to fall on his face and implore forgiveness. Then the books were re-distributed for study during the ensuing year. This custom was generally followed by all the monasteries of Lanfranc's time.

Richard Aungervyle, Bishop of Durham, born in 1281 at Bury St. Edmund's, and therefore usually known as Richard de Bury, gives a vivacious picture of the attitude of a book-lover of the Middle Ages in his *Philobiblon*, or *Lover of Books*. He there sings the praises of books, and voices their lament over their ill-treatment by degenerate clerks and by the unlearned. He also tells how he gathered his library, which was then the largest and best in England. *Philobiblon* is written in vigorous and even violent language, and is worth quoting.

Books, according to this extravagant eulogy, are "wells of living water," "golden urns in which manna is laid up, or rather, indeed, honeycombs," "the four-streamed river of Paradise, where the human mind is fed, and the arid intellect moistened and watered." "You, O Books, are the golden vessels of the temple, the arms of the clerical militia, with which the missiles of the most wicked are destroyed, fruitful olives, vines of Engedi, fig-trees knowing no sterility, burning lamps to be ever held in the hand."

Then the books are made to utter their plaint



because of the indignity to which they are subjected by the degenerate clergy. "We are expelled from the domiciles of the clergy, apportioned to us by hereditary right, in some interior chamber of which we had our peaceful cells; but, to their shame, in these nefarious times we are altogether banished to suffer opprobrium out of doors; our places, moreover, are occupied by hounds and hawks, and sometimes by a biped beast: woman, to wit . . .; wherefore this beast, ever jealous of our studies, and at all times implacable, spying us at last in a corner, protected only by the web of some long-deceased spider, drawing her forehead into wrinkles, laughs us to scorn, abuses us in virulent speeches, points us out as the only superfluous furniture in the house, complains that we are useless for any purpose of domestic economy whatever, and recommends our being bartered away forthwith for costly head dresses, cambric, silk, twice-dipped purple garments, woollen, linen, and furs."

After this terrible picture of feminine ignorance and malevolence, it is refreshing to turn to the achievements of the pious Diemudis, by way of contrast. Diemudis was a nun of Wessobrunn in Bavaria, who lived in the eleventh century. Nuns are not often referred to as writers, but of this lady it is recorded that she wrote "in a most beautiful and legible character" no less than thirty-one books, some of which were in two, three, and even six volumes. These she transcribed "to the praise of God, and of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, the patrons of this monastery."

Although the greater part of the book-writing of this time was done in the monasteries and by



monks and ecclesiastics, there were also secular professional writers, a class who had followed this occupation from very early days. They consisted of antiquarii, librarii, and illuminators, though sometimes the functions of all three were performed by one person. They were employed chiefly by the religious houses, to assist in the transcription and restoration of their books, and by the lawyers, for whom they transcribed legal documents. The antiquarii were the highest in rank, for their work did not consist merely of writing or copying, but included the restoration of faulty pages, the revision of texts, the repair of bindings, and other delicate tasks connected with the older and more valuable books which could not be entrusted to the librarii or common scribes. On the whole, the production of books was more of an industry in those days than we should believe possible, unless we admit that the Dark Ages were not quite as dark as they have been painted. "There was always about us in our halls," says Richard de Bury, who no doubt was a munificent patron of all scribes and book-workers, "no small assemblage of antiquaries, scribes, bookbinders, correctors, illuminators, and generally of all such persons as were qualified to labour in the service of books."

Books of a great size were frequently monuments of patience and industry, and sometimes half a lifetime was devoted to a single volume. Books therefore fetched high prices, though they were not always paid for in money. In 1174 the Prior of St. Swithun's, Winchester, gave the Canons of Dorchester in Oxfordshire, for Bede's Homilies and St. Augustine's Psalter, twelve measures of barley, and a pall on which was embroidered in

silver the history of St. Birinus' conversion of the Saxon King Cynegils. A hundred years later a Bible "fairly written," that is, finely written, was sold in England for fifty marks, or about £33. At this period a sheep cost one shilling. In the time of Richard de Bury a common scribe earned a halfpenny a day. About 1380 some of the expenses attending the production of an *Evangelarium*, or book of the liturgical Gospels, included thirteen and fourpence for the writing, four and threepence for the illuminating, three and fourpence for the binding, and tenpence a day for eighteen weeks, in all fifteen shillings, for the writer's "commons," or food.

The book-writers or copyists became, later, the booksellers, very much as they did in old Rome. Sometimes they both wrote and sold the books, and sometimes the sellers employed the writers to write for them, or the writers employed the sellers to sell for them. Publishers as yet did not exist. Practically the only method of publication known consisted of the reading of a work on three days in succession before the heads of the University, or other public judges, and the sanctioning of its transcription and reproduction. The booksellers were called "stationers," either because they transacted their business at open stalls or stations, or perhaps from the fact that *statio* is low Latin for *shop*; and since they were also the vendors of parchment and other writing-materials, the word "stationer" is still used to designate those who carry on a similar trade to-day. As early as 1403 there was already formed in London a society or brotherhood "of the Craft of Writers of Text-letter," and "those commonly called 'Limners,'" or Illuminators, for in that year they

petitioned the Lord Mayor for permission to elect Wardens empowered to see that the trades were honourably pursued and to punish those of the craft who dealt disloyally or who rebelled against the Wardens' authority. This petition was granted. By 1501 the Company of Stationers was established, and it is highly probable that this was only the Brotherhood of Text-writers and Limners under the more general designation.

The well-known names of Paternoster Row, Amen Corner, Ave Maria Lane, and Creed Lane still remain to show us where the London stationers who sold the common religious leaflets and devotional books of the day had their stalls, close to St. Paul's Cathedral, and in some cases even against the walls of the Cathedral itself, and where, too, the makers of beads and paternosters plied their trade. And Londoners at least will not need to be reminded that at this very moment Paternoster Row is almost entirely inhabited by sellers of books, religious and otherwise. There is also a queer open-air stall on the south side which serves to carry on the ancient tradition of the place.

Societies similar to that of the Text-Writers and Limners of London also existed on the Continent, and especially at Bruges, in which city literature and book-production flourished under the patronage of Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy, who himself gave constant employment to numerous writers, copyists, translators, and illuminators in the work of building up his famous library. The members of the Guild of St. John the Evangelist in Bruges represented no less than fifteen different trades or professions connected with books and writing. They included:

Booksellers,  
Printsellers,  
Painters of vignettes,  
Painters,  
Scriveners and copiers of books,  
Schoolmasters and schoolmistresses,  
Illuminators,  
Printers,  
Bookbinders,  
Curriers,  
Cloth shearers,  
Parchment and vellum makers,  
Boss carvers,  
Letter engravers,  
Figure engravers.

Of course, the printers here mentioned would at first be block-printers only, as will be shown presently. And it is worth noticing that in all this long list, which cannot be called at all exclusive, there is no mention of authors.

The mediæval booksellers were not all permitted to ply their trade in their own way. Since the supply of books for the students depended on them, the Universities of Paris, Oxford, and elsewhere deemed it their duty to keep them under control, having in view the maintenance of pure texts and the interests of the students, at whose expense the booksellers were not to be permitted to fatten. By the rules of the University of Paris the bookseller was required to be a man of wide learning and high character, and to bind himself to observe the laws regarding books laid down by the University. He was forbidden to offer any transcript for sale until it had been examined and found correct; and were any inaccuracy detected in it by the

examiner, he was liable to a fine or the burning of the book, according to the magnitude of his error. The price of books was also fixed by the University, and the vendor forbidden to make more than a certain rate of profit on each volume. Again, the bookseller could not purchase any books without the sanction of the University, for fear that he might be the means of disseminating heretical or immoral literature. Later, it was made obligatory on him to lend out books on hire to those who could not afford to buy them, and to expose in his shop a list of these books and the charges at which they were to be had. The poor booksellers, thus hedged about with restrictions, often joined some other occupation to that of selling manuscripts in order to make both ends meet, but when this practice came to the notice of the University they were censured for degrading their noble profession by mixing with it "vile trades." But presumably no such rules as the above hampered the booksellers of non-university towns, such as London.

The control assumed by the Universities over the book trade presently extended to interference with original writings and a censorship of literature. With the introduction of printing and the consequent increase of books and of the facilities for reproducing them this censorship was taken up by the Church.

Ecclesiastical censorship, however, was not the outcome of the Universities' assumption of control over the book trade. It sprang from the jealousy of the clergy, who opposed the spread of knowledge among the people—some, perhaps, because they knew that knowledge in ignorant hands is dangerous, and others because they

feared their own prestige might suffer. This feeling existed before printing, though printing brought it to a head. For instance, in 1415 the penalty in England for reading the Scriptures in the vernacular was forfeiture of land, cattle, body, life, and goods by the offenders and their heirs for ever, and that they should be condemned for heretics to God, enemies to the Crown, and most errant traitors to the land. They were refused right of sanctuary, and if they persisted in the offence or relapsed after a pardon were first to be hanged for treason against the King and then burned for heresy against God. Thus the clergy upheld and encouraged a censorship of the press. As early as 1479 Conrad de Homborch, a Cologne printer, had issued a Bible accompanied by canons, etc., which was "allowed and approved by the University of Cologne," and in 1486 the Archbishop of Mentz issued a mandate forbidding the translation into the vulgar tongue of Greek, Latin, and other books, without the previous approbation of the University. Finally, in 1515, a bull of Leo X. required Bishops and Inquisitors to examine all books before they came to be printed, and to suppress any heretical matter.

The Vicar of Croydon, preaching at St. Paul's Cross about the time of the spread of the art of printing, is said to have declared that "we must root out printing or printing will root out us." But an ecclesiastical censorship over the English press was not established until 1559, when an Injunction issued by Queen Elizabeth provides that, because of the publication of unfruitful, vain, and infamous books and papers, "no manner of person shall print any manner of boke or paper

. . . except the same be first licenced by her maiestie . . . or by .vi. of her privy counsel, or be perused and licensed by the archbyssshops of Cantorbury and Yorke, the bishop of London," etc. The Injunction extended also to "pamphletes, playes, and balletes," so that "nothinge therein should be either heretical, sedicious, or vnsemely for Christian eares." Classical authors, however, and works hitherto commonly received in universities and schools were not touched by the Injunction.

## CHAPTER V.

### LIBRARIES IN MEDIÆVAL TIMES.

DURING the rule of the Arabs in Northern Africa and in Spain, thousands of manuscripts were gathered together in their chief cities, such as Cairo and Cordova, and many Arabic-Spanish and Moorish writings have been preserved in the Escorial Library, though a large part of this library was burnt in 1671. With these exceptions, the collections of books belonging to the various religious houses were practically the only libraries of early mediæval times. These collections, to begin with, were very small; so small, indeed, that there was no need to set apart a special room for them. Library buildings were not erected till the fourteenth or fifteenth centuries, when the accumulation of books rendered them necessary, and those which are found in connection with old foundations will always prove to have been added later. It is said, however,

that Gozbert, abbot of St. Gall in the ninth century, who founded the library there by collecting what was then the large number of four hundred books, allotted them a special room over the scriptorium. But as a rule the books were kept in the church, and then, as the number increased, in the cloisters. The cloister was the common living-room of the monks, where they read and studied, and carried out most of their daily duties. The books were either stored in presses, though no such press remains to show us upon what pattern they were built, or in recesses in the wall, probably closed by doors. Two of these recesses may be seen in the cloisters at Worcester. In Cistercian houses, says Mr. J. W. Clark, to whose Rede Lecture (1894) I am indebted for these details, this recess developed "into a small square room without a window, and but little larger than an ordinary cupboard. In the plans of Clairvaux and Kirkstall this room is placed between the chapter-house and the transept of the church; and similar rooms, in similar situations, have been found at Fountains, Beaulieu, Tintern, Netley, etc." The books were placed on shelves round the walls. When the cloister windows came to be glazed, so as to afford better protection from the weather for the persons and things within the cloister, they were occasionally decorated with allusions to the authors of the books in the adjacent presses.

Sometimes *carrells* were set up in the cloister, a *carrell* being a sort of pew, in which study could be conducted with more privacy than in the open cloister. The *carrell* was placed so that it was closed at one end by one of the cloister



windows and remained open at the other. Examples still survive at Gloucester.

The arrangement of the libraries which were subsequently added to most of the larger monasteries in the fifteenth century is unknown, as none of the furniture or fittings seem to have come down to the present day either in England or in France or Italy. But Mr. Clark thinks that the collegiate libraries will give us the key to the plan of the monastic libraries, since the rules relating to the libraries of Oxford and Cambridge were framed on those which obtained in the "book-houses" of the religious foundations. From these collegiate libraries we gather that it was customary to chain the books, so that they might be accessible to all and yet secure from those who might wish to appropriate them temporarily or otherwise. The shelf to which the volumes were fastened took the form of an "elongated lectern or desk," at which the reader might sit. Pembroke College and Queen's College, Cambridge, had desks of this type, which was also in use on the Continent. In some places the desks were modified by the addition of shelves above or below.

Mr. Falconer Madan, in his *Books in Manuscript*, quotes the following account, which he translates from the Latin register of Titchfield Abbey, written at the end of the fourteenth century, and which shows the care and method with which the books were kept: "The arrangement of the library of the monastery of Tychefeld is this:—There are in the library of Tychefeld four cases (*columnæ*) in which to place books, of which two, the first and second, are in the eastern face; on the southern face is the third, and on

the northern face the fourth. And each of them has eight shelves (*gradus*), marked with a letter and number affixed on the front of each shelf. . . . So all and singular the volumes of the said library are fully marked on the first leaf and elsewhere on the shelf belonging to the book, with certain numbered letters. And in order that what is in the library may be more quickly found, the marking of the shelves of the said library, the inscriptions in the books, and the reference in the register, in all points agree with each other. Anno domini, MCCCC." Then is shown the order in which the books lie on the shelves. Briefly, the sequence of subjects and books is as follows:—Bibles, Bibles with commentary, theology, lives of saints, sermons, canon law, commentaries on canon law, civil law, medicine, arts, grammar, miscellaneous volumes, logic and philosophy, English law, eighteen French volumes, and a hundred and two liturgical volumes. Titchfield Abbey owned altogether over a thousand volumes.

The monastic librarian, as we should call him, was known as the *armarius*, since he had charge of the *armaria* or book-presses. He frequently united this office to that of precentor or leader of the choir, for at first the service-books were his chief care. It was his business to make the catalogue, to examine the volumes from time to time to see that mould or book-worms or other dangers were not threatening them, to give out books for transcription, and to distribute the various writing-materials used in the scriptorium or writing-room. He had also to collate such works as were bound to follow one text, such as Bibles, missals, monastic rules, etc. To these duties he often added

that of secretary to the abbot and to the monastery generally.

Many catalogues of monastic libraries are extant, and several belonging to continental foundations were compiled at a very early period. Of the library of St. Gall, founded by the Abbé Gozbert in 816, a contemporary catalogue still exists. The St. Gall library contained four hundred volumes, a large number for those days, and, moreover, was provided with a special room, a chamber over the scriptorium. It is not easy to see why in this and other cases of the co-existence of a library and a scriptorium one room was not made to do duty for both. But to return to the catalogues. Another early example is that of the Abbey of Clugni, in France, made in 831, and forming part of an inventory of the Abbey property. The Benedictine Abbey of Reichenau, on the Rhine, had four catalogues compiled in the ninth century—two of the books in the library, one of certain transcriptions made and added thereto, and one of additions to the library from other sources. Among English monastic book-lists, there is one of Whitby Abbey, which appears to have been made in 1180, and the library of Glastonbury Abbey, which excited the wonder and admiration of Leland, and which was started by St. Dunstan round a nucleus of a few books formerly brought to the Abbey by Irish missionaries, was catalogued in 1247 or 1248. Catalogues of the books at Canterbury (Christ Church and St. Augustine's monastery), Peterborough, Durham, Leicester, Ramsey, and other foundations are also known, and these, with the notices of Leland, form our only sources of information as to these various literary store-houses.

As regards their contents, the Scriptures, missals, service-books, and similar manuscripts formed the larger part of the monastic libraries, but besides these they included copies of patristic and classical works, devotional and moral writings, lives of saints, chronicles, books on medicine, grammar, philosophy, logic, and, later, romances and fiction were admitted into this somewhat austere company. The catalogue of the "boc-house" of the monastery of St. Augustine at Canterbury, written towards the close of the fifteenth century, names many romantic works, including the *Four Sons of Aymon*, *Guy of Warwick*, *The Book of Lancelot*, *The Story of the Graal*, *Sir Perceval de Galois*, *The Seven Sages*, and others, and of some of these there is more than one copy.

Books were frequently lent to other monasteries, or to poor clerks and students. It was considered a sacred duty thus to share the benefits of the books with others; but sometimes the custodians of the precious volumes, aware of the failures of memory to which book-borrowers have ever been peculiarly liable, were so averse from running the risk of lending that the libraries were placed under anathema, and could not be lent under pain of excommunication. But the selfishness and injustice of such a practice being recognised, it was formally condemned by the Council of Paris in 1212, and the anathemas annulled. Anathemas were also pronounced against any who should steal or otherwise alienate a book from its lawful owners.

But as even in mediæval days there were those who loved books better than honesty, the loan of a volume was accompanied by legal

forms and ceremonies, and the borrower, whatever his station or character, had to sign a bond for the due return of the work, and often to deposit security as well. Thus, when about 1225 the Dean of York presented several Bibles for the use of the students of Oxford, he did so on condition that those who used them should deposit a cautionary pledge. Again, in 1299, John de Pontissara, Bishop of Winchester, borrowed from the convent of St. Swithun the *Bibliam bene glossatum*, i.e. the Bible with annotations, and gave a bond for its return. And in 1471, when books had become much more common, no less a person than the King of France, desiring to borrow some Arabian medical works from the Faculty of Medicine at Paris, had not only to deposit some costly plate as security, but to find a nobleman to act as surety with him for the return of the books, under pain of a heavy forfeit.

Many of the great monastic libraries owed their origin to the liberality of one donor, usually an ecclesiastic. Among other libraries destroyed by the Danes was the fine collection of books at Wearmouth monastery, made by Benedict Biscop, the first English book collector, who was so eager in the cause of books that he is said to have made no less than five journeys to Rome in order to search for them. Part of his library was given to the Abbey at Jarrow, and shared the same fate as the books at Wearmouth.

One of the earliest English libraries was that of Christ Church, *i. e.* the Cathedral, at Canterbury. On the authority of the Canterbury Book, a fifteenth century manuscript preserved at Cambridge, this library began with the nine books

said to have been brought from Rome by St. Augustine. These nine books were a Bible in two volumes, a Psalter, a Book of Gospels, the Lives of the Apostles, the Lives of the Martyrs, and an Exposition of the Gospels and Epistles. This collection was enriched by the magnificent scriptural and classical volumes brought from the continent by Archbishop Theodore in the seventh century. Under Archbishop Chicheley, in the fifteenth century, this library was provided with a dwelling of its own, built over the Prior's Chapel, and containing sixteen bookcases of four shelves each. At this time a catalogue was already in existence, made by Prior Eastry at the end of the thirteenth or beginning of the fourteenth century, and records about three thousand volumes.

The monastery of St. Mary's at York owned a library which was founded by Archbishop Egbert. Egbert's pupil Alcuin, whom Charlemagne charged with the care of the educational interests of his empire, soon after taking up his residence at St. Martin's at Tours, desired the emperor to send to Britain for "those books which we so much need ; thus transplanting into France the flowers of Britain, that the garden of Paradise may not be confined to York, but may send some of its scions to Tours."

Richard de Bury, the famous old book collector or bibliomaniac to whom reference has already been made, bequeathed his books, which outnumbered all other collections in this country, to the University of Oxford, where they were housed in Durham College, which he had endowed. He has left an interesting account of how he gathered his treasures, which may fitly be

quoted here. Aided by royal favour, he tells us, "we acquired a most ample facility of visiting at pleasure and of hunting as it were some of the most delightful coverts, the public and private libraries both of the regulars and the seculars. . . . Then the cabinets of the most notable monasteries were opened, cases were unlocked, caskets were unclasped, and astonished volumes which had slumbered for long ages in their sepulchres were roused up, and those that lay hid in dark places were overwhelmed with a new light. . . . Thus the sacred vessels of science came into the power of our disposal, some being given, some sold, and not a few lent for a time." The embassies with which he was charged by Edward III. gave him opportunity for hunting continental coverts also. "What a rush of the flood of pleasure rejoiced our hearts as often as we visited Paris, the paradise of the world! . . . There, in very deed, with an open treasury and untied purse-strings, we scattered money with a light heart, and redeemed inestimable books with dirt and dust." Richard de Bury also furthered his collection by making friends of the mendicant friars, and "allured them with the most familiar affability into a devotion to his person, and having allured, cherished them for the love of God with munificent liberality." The affability and liberality of the good bishop attained their object, and the devoted friars went about everywhere, searching and finding, and whenever he visited them, placed the treasures of their houses at his disposal. Although the mendicant orders were originally forbidden property of any kind, this rule was afterwards greatly relaxed, especially as regards books, and in Richard de Bury's time the



friars had amassed large libraries and were well-known as keen collectors.

In France it was not an uncommon practice for a monastery to levy a tax on its members or its dependent houses for the increase of its library, and in several houses it was customary for a novice to present writing materials at his entry and a book at the conclusion of his novitiate. As early as the close of the eleventh century Marchwart, Abbot of Corvey in North Germany, made it a rule that every novice on making his profession should add a book to the library.

The monastic libraries met their doom at the time of the Reformation and of the suppression of the religious houses. Nearly all the books at Oxford, including the gifts of Richard de Bury, were burnt by the mob, and under Elizabeth the royal commissioners ordered the destruction of all "capes, vestments, albes, missals, books, crosses, and such other idolatrous and superstitious monuments whatsoever." Since those who ought to have been more enlightened classed missals and books among idolatrous and superstitious monuments, it is not to be wondered at that the ignorant and indiscriminating mob should glory in their wanton destruction. Books that escaped the fire or the fury of the mob were put to various uses as waste paper. They were employed for "scouring candlesticks and cleaning boots," for the wrapping up of the wares of "grocers and soap-sellers," and were exported by shiploads for the use of continental bookbinders. On the continent, too, fire, wars, plunder, and suppression dispersed or destroyed many of the monastic collections.

A comparatively recent instance of book de-



struction caused by the fury of the rabble is afforded by the great losses undergone by Bristol Cathedral library in the riots which took place in connection with the passing of the Reform Bill. The palace was set on fire, and the library, which was lodged in the Chapter-house, was brought out and most of the volumes hurled into the flames. Others were thrown into the river, into ditches, and about the streets, and although about eleven hundred were subsequently recovered from second-hand clothes dealers and marine stores, only two copies and one set remained intact.

As a natural consequence of the revival of learning in the fourteenth century, private libraries began to increase in size and in number, and the collection of books was no longer left to monks and priests. King John of France gathered a little library, some say of only twenty volumes, which laid the foundation of the great Royal Library, now the Bibliothèque Nationale. These he bequeathed to his son, Charles V., who increased the number to nine hundred, for his known fondness for books and reading obtained for him presentation volumes from many of his subjects. His books included works of devotion, astrology, medicine, law, history, and romance, with a few classical authors. Most of them were finely written on vellum, and sumptuously bound in jewelled and gold-bedecked covers. They were lodged in three rooms in the Louvre, in a tower called "La Tour de la libraire." These rooms had wainscots of Irish [bog?] oak, and ceilings of cypress "curiously carved." According to Henault, the library of the Louvre was sent to England by the Duke of Bedford while Regent of France, and only a

few volumes afterwards found their way back to Paris.

One of the finest libraries of this period was possessed by Philippe le Bon, Duke of Burgundy. It contained nearly two thousand volumes, mostly magnificent folios clothed in silk and satin, and ornamented with gold and precious stones. Books were now the fashion, the fashionable possessions, the fashionable gifts, among those who were wealthy enough to afford them. Louis de Bruges, Seigneur de la Gruthyse, was another famous collector, whose books were no less splendid in their size, beauty, and costliness, than those of the Duke of Burgundy. His collection was afterwards added to the Royal Library, and some of its treasures still exist in the Bibliothèque Nationale.

The rich and cultured of Italy were also busily collecting books and forming libraries. A library was made by Cardinal Bessarion at a cost of thirty thousand sequins, and afterwards became the property of the church of St. Mark at Venice. Venice already possessed a small collection of books given to it by Petrarch, but the gift was so little thought of that it lay neglected in the Palazzo Molina until some of the volumes had crumbled to powder, and others had petrified, as it were, through the damp.

Of English collectors of this period Richard de Bury was the most famous. As has already been stated, he possessed the largest number of books in the country, and these he bequeathed to the University of Oxford. The Aungervyle Library, as it was called, was destroyed at the Reformation. Guy de Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick, also had a very fine collection. He preferred romances,

however, to theology or law, and his library contained many such works. At his death he bequeathed it to the Abbey of Bordesley, in Worcestershire.

The English kings had not as yet paid much attention to books. Eleven are mentioned in the wardrobe accounts as belonging to Edward I., and not until the time of Henry VII. was any serious consideration given to the formation of the Royal Library.

Among the more famous continental book collectors of a later period were Matthias Corvinus, King of Hungary, and Frederick, Duke of Urbino. The library of the King of Hungary perhaps excelled all others in its size and splendour. It is said to have contained nearly fifty thousand volumes, but only a comparatively small number survived the barbarous attack of the Turks, who stole the jewels from the bindings and destroyed the books themselves. The Duke of Urbino's library was scarcely less magnificent, and was distinguished by its completeness. All obtainable works were represented, and no imperfect copies admitted. The duke had thirty-four transcribers in his service.

After the monastic libraries had been destroyed, and when old ideas were beginning to give place to new, the restrictions formerly placed on the reading of the Scriptures by the people at large were withdrawn. In an Injunction, dated 1559, Elizabeth ordered that the people were to be exhorted to read the Bible, not discouraged, and she directed the clergy to provide at the parish expense a book of the whole Bible in English within three months, and within twelve months a copy of Erasmus' Paraphrases

upon the Gospels, also in English. These books were to be set up in the church for the use and reading of the parishioners. The chain is not mentioned in the Injunction, but was probably adopted as a matter of course. Chained books in churches thus became common, and besides the Bible, very generally included copies of Fox's *Book of Martyrs* and Jewel's *Apology for the Church of England*. The chained books at St. Luke's, Chelsea, consist of a Vinegar Bible, a Prayer Book, the Homilies, and two copies of the *Book of Martyrs*.

The custom of chaining books, as we have seen, was followed in the college libraries, and obtained also in church libraries in England and on the continent. Among the still existing libraries whose books are thus secured are those of Hereford Cathedral and Wimborne Minster in England, and the church of St. Wallberg at Zutphen, in Holland. The last, however, was not always chained, and thereby hangs a tale. Once upon a time the Devil, having a spite against the good books of which it was composed, despoiled it of some of its best volumes. The mark of his cloven hoof upon the flagged floor gave the clue to the identity of the thief, whereupon the custodians of the books had them secured by chains sprinkled with holy water, by which means the malice of the Evil One was made of none effect.

## CHAPTER VI.

## THE BEGINNING OF PRINTING.

THE germs of the invention which, in spite of Carlyle's somewhat slighting reference, has proved itself hardly less momentous in the world's history than the conception of the idea of writing, are to be found in the stamps with which the ancients impressed patterns or names upon vases or other objects, or in the device and name-bearing seals which were in common use among the nations of antiquity. But these stamps and seals could be used only to impress some plastic material, not to make ink or other marks upon paper; and for the first example of printing, as we understand the word, we must look to China, where, it is said, as early as the sixth century, A.D., engraved wooden plates were used for the production of books. The Chinese, however, kept their invention to themselves, or at anyrate it spread no further than Japan, until many years later; and although in the tenth century the knowledge of printing was carried as far as Egypt, Europeans seem to have made the discovery for themselves, quite independently of help from the East, both as regards block-printing and the use of moveable type.

In Europe, as in China, the first printing was done by means of a block, that is, a slab of wood on which the design was carved in relief, and from which, when inked, an impression could be transferred to paper or other material. This process is known as block-printing, and in Europe was principally used for the production

of illustrations, the text, which came to be added later, being accessory and subordinate to the picture.

The first European block-prints are pictures of saints, roughly printed on a leaf of paper and usually rudely coloured. Heinecken, whose *Idée general d'une Collection complete a'Estampes* (1771) is still a standard work, is of opinion that pictures of this class were first executed by the old makers of playing-cards, and that the playing-cards themselves were printed from wood and not drawn separately by hand. In this case the cards should rank as the earliest examples of block-printing or wood-engraving. Heinecken has not been alone in entertaining this opinion, but, on the other hand, there are some who consider that the portraits represent the first woodcuts, and that the early playing-cards were drawn and painted by hand.

The single-leaf portraits of saints were produced chiefly, or perhaps solely, in Germany, and examples are now rare. It is curious that most of those which have survived to the present day have been found in German religious houses, pasted inside the covers of old books, and thus shielded from the destruction to which their fragile nature rendered them liable. One specimen, which has the reputation of being the earliest extant with which a date can be connected, is the well-known St. Christopher, which represents the saint carrying the child Christ over a stream, after an old legend. This specimen bears the date 1423, and was discovered pasted in the cover of a mediæval manuscript in the monastery at Buxheim, in Swabia, and is now in the John Rylands Library at Manchester. The date, how-

ever, may be only that of the engraving of the block, and not the year of printing. A theory was put forward by Mr. H. F. Holt, at the meeting of the British Archæological Association in 1868, that this St. Christopher, so far from being the earliest known specimen of printing of any sort, belonged to a period subsequent to the invention of typography, and that the date 1423 refers only to the jubilee year of the saint, and not to the execution of the print. He also held that the block-books, to which we refer below, were not the predecessors of type-printed books, as they are usually considered to be, but merely cheap substitutes for the costly works of the early printers. But these theories, though not disproved, do not receive the support of bibliographers in general.

Another early woodcut is the Brussels Print, which is in the Royal Library at Brussels. It is ostensibly dated 1418, but although this date is accepted by some, it has most probably been tampered with, and therefore the position of the print is at least doubtful. It is of Flemish origin, and represents the Virgin and Child, accompanied by SS. Barbara, Catharine, Veronica, and Margaret. Other prints exist which are not dated, and it is quite possible that some of these may be older than the St. Christopher, though no definite statements as to their date can be made. It is certain, however, that the art of block-printing was known in the closing years of the fourteenth century, and that it was practised thenceforward until about 1510, that is, some years after the invention of typography. In many manuscripts of the period, printed illustrations were inserted by means of blocks, either to

save time, or because the scribe's skill did not extend to drawings.

These early woodcuts were the forerunners of the better known block-books, which also, according to Heineken, were at first the work of the card-makers. Block-books consisted of prints accompanied by a descriptive or explanatory text, both text and illustration being printed from the same block. Since they were intended for the moral instruction of those whose education did not fit them for the study of more elaborate works, they generally deal with Scriptural and religious subjects. The earliest of all the block-books was the *Biblia Pauperum*, or "Bible of the Poor," so called because it was designed for the edification of persons of unlearned minds and light purses, who could neither have afforded the high prices demanded for ordinary manuscript copies, nor have read such copies had they owned them. The *Biblia Pauperum*, however, exactly met their want. It is not so much a book to read, as a book to look at. It has a text, it is true, but the text is subordinate to the pictures.

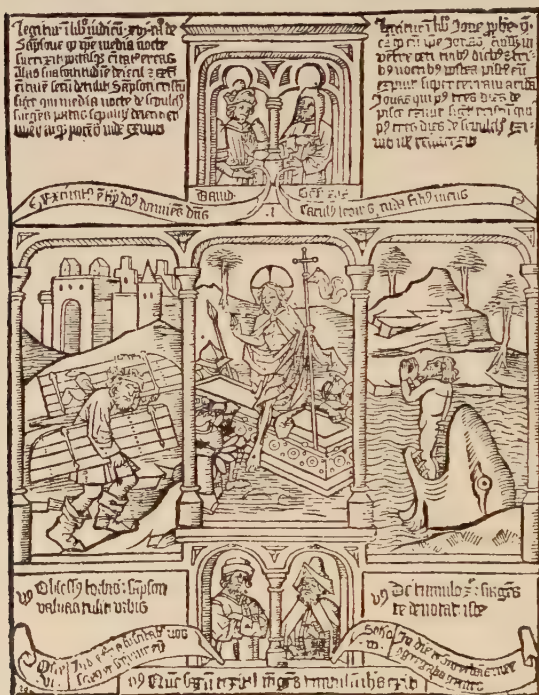
The *Biblia Pauperum* is on paper, as paper was cheaper than vellum and considered quite good enough for the purpose. One side only of each leaf was printed, two pages being printed from one block, and the sheets folded once and arranged in sequence, not "quired" or "nested." The resulting order was that of two printed pages face to face, followed by two blank pages face to face. The illustrations are of scenes from sacred history, and portraits of Biblical personages, accompanied by explanatory Latin or German texts in Gothic characters. The original designer



and compiler of this favourite block-book is unknown, but he certainly worked on lines laid down by some much older author and artist, for manuscript works of similar nature existed at least as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century. The earliest known instance of a composition of the kind, however, is a series of enamels on an antependium or altar-frontal in the St. Leopold Chapel at Klosterneuberg, near Vienna, which originally contained forty-five pictures dealing with Biblical subjects, arranged in the same order as in the *Biblia Pauperum*, and which were executed by Nicolas de Verdun, in 1181. Some attribute the inception of the *Biblia Pauperum* to Ansgarius, first Bishop of Hamburg, in the ninth century, others to Wernher, a German monk of the twelfth century, but it seems unlikely that the point will ever be decided. The *Biblia Pauperum* is usually supposed to have been first printed xylographically in Holland, and type-printed editions were issued later from Bamberg, Paris, and Vienna.

To modern eyes the illustrations of this book are strange and wonderful indeed. "The designer certainly had no thought of irreverence," says De Vinne, "but many of the designs are really ludicrous. Some of the anachronisms are: Gideon arrayed in plate-armour, with mediæval helmet and visor and Turkish scimitar; David and Solomon in rakish, wide-brimmed hats, bearing high, conical crowns; the translation of Elijah in a four-wheeled vehicle resembling the modern farmer's hay-wagon. Slouched hats, puffed doublets, light legged breeches and pointed shoes are seen in the apparel of the Israelites who are not represented as priests or soldiers.

Some houses have Italian towers and some have Moorish minarets, but in none of the pictures is



Page from the *Biblia Pauperum* (second edition).

there an exhibition of pointed Gothic architecture."

Our illustration gives a reduced representation of a page from the second edition of the *Biblia*

*Pauperum*, dating from about 1450. The middle panel shows Christ rising from the tomb, and the wonder and fear of the Roman guards; the left-hand panel shows Samson carrying off the gates of the city of Gaza, and the right-hand panel the disgorging of Jonah by the whale. The upper part of the text shows how that Samson and Jonah were types of Christ, and the four little figures represent David, Jacob, Hosea, and Siphonias (Zephaniah), the texts on the scrolls being quotations from their words.

The accompanying rhymes are as follows:

Obsessus turbis : Sāpson valvas tulit urbis.  
 Quem saxum textit : ingens tumulum Jesus exit.  
 De tumulo Christe : surgens te denotat iste.

(In the midst of crowds, Samson removes the gates of the city. The anointed Jesus, whom the stone covered, rises from the tomb. This man [Jonah] rising from the tomb, denotes Thee, O Christ !)

Another very popular block-book, of German origin, was the curious compilation known as *Ars Moriendi*—the Art of Dying—or, as it is sometimes called, *Temptationes Demonis*, or Temptation of Demons. It describes how dying persons are beset by all manner of temptations, the final triumph of the good, and the sad end of the wicked, with suitable emotions on the part of the attendant angels, and the hideous demons by which the temptations are personified. This work was greatly in vogue in the fifteenth century, and after the invention of type-printing was reproduced in various parts of France, Italy, Germany, and Holland.

The only block-book without illustrations was the *Donatus de octibus partibus orationis*, or Donatus

on the Eight Parts of Speech, shortly known as Donatus. It was *the* Latin grammar of the period, and was the work of Donatus, a famous Roman grammarian of the fourth century. Large numbers were printed both from blocks and from type, but xylographic fragments are scarce, and none are known of any date before the second half of the fifteenth century. Yet it is believed that probably more copies of this work were printed than of any other block-book whatever. Besides its lack of illustrations, the xylographic Donatus is unique among block-books from the fact that it was printed on vellum and not on paper, and (another unusual feature) on both sides of the leaf. Vellum was dear, and had to be made the most of, and no doubt was used only because a paper book would have fared badly at the hands of the schoolboys.

Only one block-book is known to have been printed in France, and that is *Les Neuf Preux*, or the Nine Champions. The nine champions are divided into three groups: first, classical heroes—Hector, Alexander, and Julius Cæsar; next, Biblical heroes—Joshua, David, and Judas Maccabæus; and lastly, heroes of romance—Arthur, Charlemagne, and Godefroi of Boulogne. The portraits of these celebrities are accompanied by verses. This block-book dates from about 1455.

Other block-books were the *Speculum Humane Salvationis*, the *Apocalypse of St. John*, the *Book of Canticles*, *Defensorium Inviolatæ Virginitatis Beatæ Mariæ Virginis*, *Mirabilia Romæ*; various German almanacks, and a *Planetenbuch*, this last representing the heavenly bodies and their influence on human life. The last of the block-books, so

far as is known, was the *Opera nova contemplativa*, which was executed at Venice about 1510.

From one point of view the *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, or Mirror of Salvation, is the most curious of its kind. It is looked upon as the connecting link between block-books proper and type-printed books. Its purpose seems to have been to afford instruction in the facts and lessons of the Christian religion, beginning with the fall of Satan. It is founded on an old and once popular manuscript-work sometimes ascribed to Brother John, a Benedictine Monk of the thirteenth or fourteenth century. Four so-called "editions" of the *Speculum* are known, two of which are in Latin rhyme, and two in Dutch prose, all four having many points in common and standing apart from the later and dated editions afterwards produced in Germany, Holland, and France.

In these early copies the body of the work consists of a text printed from moveable types, with a block-printed illustration at the head of each page. But one of the Latin editions is remarkable for having twenty pages of the text printed from wood-blocks. How and why these xylographic pages appear in a book whose remaining forty-two pages are printed from types is a mystery. They are inserted at intervals among the other leaves, and for this and other reasons it is considered improbable that they were printed from blocks originally intended for a block-book, to help to eke out a not very plentiful stock of type. Moreover, no entirely xylographic *Speculum* exists to lend colour to such a theory.

The time and place of origin of the *Speculum*

are unknown, and bibliographers are not agreed as to the order in which the several "editions" appeared. But such evidence as exists points to Holland as the home of the printed *Speculum*, and those who believe that Coster of Haarlem invented typography, credit him with having produced it.

Block-books are nearly all of German, Dutch, or Flemish workmanship. As a rule the illustrations are roughly coloured by hand. The method by which they were printed is generally supposed to have been that of laying a dampened sheet of paper on the inked block, and rubbing it with a dabber or frotton until the impression was worked up. But De Vinne, in his *History of Printing*, says that there are practical reasons against the correctness of this view, and considers it more probable that a rude hand-press was used.

Those who wish to see some modern examples of block-printing may be referred to the books printed by the late William Morris at the celebrated Kelmscott Press at Hammersmith. The title-pages and initial words of these volumes were executed by means of wood-blocks, and are as beautiful examples of block-printing as the texts of the works they adorn are of typography. All the Kelmscott printing, whose history, though most interesting, is nevertheless outside the present subject, was done by hand-presses.

## CHAPTER VII.

## WHO INVENTED MOVEABLE TYPES?

THE wood-block, however, was merely a stepping-stone to the greatest of all events in the history of printing, the invention of moveable types; that is, of letters formed separately, which, after being grouped into words, and sentences, and paragraphs, could be redistributed and used again for all sorts of books. Here once more our Chinese friends were ahead of the rest of the world, for, more than four centuries before German printers existed, Picheng, a Chinese smith, had shown his countrymen how to print from moveable types made of burnt clay. But the process which was to prove of such untold value to those who employed the simple Roman alphabet was almost useless to the Chinese, since the immense number of their characters rendered the older method the less tedious and cumbersome of the two. In China and Japan, therefore, the use of moveable types was of short duration. In Europe, however, when the art of printing from moveable types once became known, the case was very different.

Once upon a time, as a magnate of the city of Haarlem was walking in a wood near the city, he idly cut some letters on the bark of a beech tree. It then suddenly occurred to him that these letters might be impressed upon paper; whereupon he made some impressions of them for the amusement of his grandchildren. This, we have learned from our youth up, is how the art of printing came to be discovered. But un-



fortunately, this legend is not to be relied upon. As a matter of fact, the first inventor of printing is unknown, and even as regards moveable types it is impossible to say with absolute certainty when or by whom the idea was first conceived. Daunon, in his *Analyse des Opinions diverses sur l'origine de l'Imprimerie*, tells us that no less than fifteen towns claim to be the birthplace of printing, and that a still larger number of persons have been put forward as its inventors, from Saturn, Job, and Charlemagne downwards. The arguments for or against the pretensions of Saturn, Job, and Charlemagne, and, indeed, of the majority of the personages whose names have been mentioned in this connection, do not call for notice. For although the first printer is not known, many believe that they can point him out with tolerable certainty, and in the fierce battle which has raged round the question of the identity of the inventor of moveable types, two names alone have been used as the respective war-cries of the opposing armies. One is Johann Gutenberg of Mentz, and the other, Laurenz Coster of Haarlem.

Although the balance of opinion is now, and always has been, in favour of Gutenberg, the battle has been long and furious. The diligence of the disputants in collecting data in support of their theories has been equalled only by the vigour and ferocity with which some of their number have maintained their opinions. Each side has charged the other with forging evidence, and ink and abuse have been freely poured out in the cause of typographical truth. Yet though sought for during several centuries, no conclusive proof has been discovered by either side; typo-



graphical truth remains in her well, and the identity of the inventor of moveable types seems almost as hard to determine as that of the man in the iron mask or the writer of the letters of Junius. The partisans of Coster have been as eminent and as able as those of Gutenberg, and thus the unlearned enquirer finds it difficult to declare for one rather than the other, without investigating for himself all the ins and outs of this involved subject. Even then, without some previous bias in one or the other direction, he would probably find himself halting between two opinions. Such an investigation is obviously out of the question here, and even were it practicable it could hardly be hoped that where so many doctors disagree our modest effort would produce any valuable result. We shall therefore do no more than briefly set forth some of the chief arguments on either side as fairly as may be, but without attempting an exhaustive examination of the evidence, first, however, declaring ourselves as followers of the majority and partisans of Gutenberg, by way of sheet anchor.

Those who advocate the claims of Holland against Germany largely base their belief on the existence of various printed books and fragments of Dutch origin, undated, and affording no clue to the time and place at which they were printed, or to their printer, whether Coster or another. It is much more likely, they say, that these were the first rude attempts at typography, and that they gave the idea to the Mentz printers, who forthwith improved upon it, than that the Mentz printers should have given the idea to the Dutch, who, so far from improving upon it, produced these clumsy imitations of fine German work.

And Mr. Hessels, who made a complete examination of the evidence in favour of Gutenberg, was unable to say either that Gutenberg invented type-printing, or that he did not invent it. On the other hand, "it is certainly possible," say the writers of the *Guide to the British Museum*, "that actual printing may have been previously executed in Holland; although, to our minds, the improbability of the printers who are asserted to have produced *Donatus* and the *Speculum* from moveable types ten years before Gutenberg having produced nothing but the like kind of work for nearly twenty years after him outweighs all the arguments which have been advanced in support of their claim. It is at all events certain that, without some very direct and positive evidence on the other side, mankind will continue to regard Gutenberg as the parent of the art, and Mainz as its birthplace."

Within recent years a claim for the honour of the invention has been put forward on behalf of quite another part of the world. Some early fifteenth century documents discovered in Avignon make unmistakable references to printing, and not to zylography, and from them we learn that Procopius Waldfoghel, a silversmith of Prague, was engaged in printing at Avignon in 1444, and had undertaken to cut a set of Hebrew types for a Jew whom he had previously instructed in the art of printing. No specimens of his work are known, and it is therefore impossible to say exactly to what process these records refer, but it has been conjectured that it may have been some method of stamping letters from cut type, and not from cast type by means of a press.

Since Coster is the hero of the well-known

story quoted above, and since as regards our present purpose there is less to be said of him than of Gutenberg, we will briefly recapitulate what is known about him, and the foundations on which his fame as a typographer rests, before dealing more at length with Gutenberg and the Mentz press.

It does not seem easy to account for the existence of what the partisans of Gutenberg contemptuously term the Coster legend. It has been conjectured, somewhat plausibly, that Haarlem's jealousy of the superiority and fame of Mentz and its printers began very early, and arose from the narrow vanity of those Haarlemers who imagined that the first printing press in Haarlem must necessarily be the first printing press in the world. However this may be, the legend arose, and waxed strong, and many believed in it.

Laurenz Janssoen, or Coster, was born in Haarlem about 1370. He is said to have held various high offices, such as sheriff, treasurer, officer of the city guard, and especially that of Coster to the great church of Haarlem. Coster means sacristan or sexton, but the position was one of far greater honour than is now associated with it. But another account, which is supported by all the available records, represents him as a tallow-chandler, and subsequently as an inn-keeper, and if he had anything at all to do with the great church, it was only that he supplied it with candles. But whether chandler or coster, nothing is heard of him as a printer until 1568, more than a hundred years after his alleged success in printing from types—in itself a strange fact, since if Coster were the inventor, why were

the Mentz printers allowed to appropriate all the credit to themselves, unchallenged by Coster's kinsfolk or countrymen, and supported by the opinions of sixty-two writers, including Caxton, the chronicler Fabian, Trithemius, and the compilers of the Cologne and Nuremberg chronicles? It is true that "few sometimes may know when thousands err," but silence is no proof of truth, and if Coster's representatives possessed the truth, how came they to withhold it from a deluded world?

Although Coster is not named till 1568, the claims of Haarlem to be the birthplace of printing had been put forward (for the first time) some years earlier by Jan Van Zuyren in a work on the Invention of Typography, of which only a fragment remains. The claims of Haarlem, he says, "are at this day fresh in the remembrance of our fathers, to whom, so to express myself, they have been transmitted from hand to hand from their ancestors." Thus, though probably writing in all good faith, Van Zuyren bases his statements on nothing better than tradition. "The city of Mentz," he goes on to say, "without doubt merits great praise for having been the first to publish to the world, in a becoming garb, an invention which she received from us, for having perfected and embellished an art as yet rude and imperfect. . . . It is certain that the foundations of this splendid art were laid in our city of Haarlem, rudely, indeed, but still the first."

Coornhert, an engraver, and a partner of Van Zuyren, repeats the same statements, and on the same basis, in the preface to a translation of Cicero which he published in 1561, but is acute

enough to see that the case for Haarlem is nearly hopeless. "I am aware," he says, "that in consequence of the blameable neglect of our ancestors, the common opinion that this art was invented at Mentz is now firmly established, that it is in vain to hope to change it, even by the best evidence and the most irrefragable proof." He proceeds to declare his conviction of the justice of Haarlem's claim, because of "the faithful testimonies of men alike respectable from their age and authority, who not only have often told me of the family of the inventor, and of his name and surname, but have even described to me the rude manner of printing first used, and pointed out to me with their fingers the abode of the first printer. And therefore, not because I am jealous of the glory of others, but because I love truth, and desire to pay all tribute to the honour of our city which is justly her due, I have thought it incumbent upon me to mention these things." Yet it is strange that he did not think it incumbent upon him to mention the name and surname of the inventor, since he had been told them so often.

Hadrian Junius, said to have been the most learned man in Holland after Erasmus, is the first to give to the world the fully-developed legend of Coster. This he does in his *Batavia*, which was finished in 1568 and published posthumously twenty years later. It is he who first mentions Coster by name, and gives the story of the walk in the woods. He relates how Coster devised block-printing, and calling in the help of his son-in-law, Thomas Peter, produced the block-book *Speculum Humanæ Salvationis*, and then advanced to types of wood, then to types of lead, and finally

to types of lead and tin combined. Prospering in his new art, he engaged numerous workmen, one of whom, probably named Johann Faust, as soon as he had mastered the process of printing and of casting type, stole his master's types and other apparatus one Christmas Eve, and fled to Amsterdam, thence to Cologne, and finally to Mentz. For all this Junius also adduces no better authority than hearsay, but nevertheless it is his statements which have brought Coster to the front and given him such reputation as he now enjoys.

No books bearing Coster's name are known, though this in itself is no argument against him, for the name of Gutenberg himself is not found in any of his own productions. It is not only highly improbable that Coster was the first printer, but also doubtful whether he printed anything at all. But those who think otherwise consider that the idea of printing occurred to him about 1428 or 1430, and that he executed, among other books, the *Biblia Pauperum*, the *Speculum*, the *Ars Moriendi*, and *Donatus*.

The people of Holland still retain their faith in Coster. Statues have been erected, medals struck, tablets put up, and holidays observed in his honour.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### GUTENBERG AND THE MENTZ PRESS.

JOHANN or Hans Gutenberg was born at Mentz in or about the year 1400. His father's name was Gensfleisch, but he is always known

by his mother's maiden name of Gutenberg or Gutemberg. It was customary in Germany at that time for a son to assume his mother's name if it happened that she had no other kinsman to carry it on. Of Gutenberg's early life, of his education or profession, we know nothing. But we know that his family, with many of their fellow-citizens, left Mentz when Gutenberg was about twenty years of age, on account of the disturbed state of the city. They probably went to Strasburg, but this is uncertain. In 1430 Gutenberg's name appears among others in an amnesty, granted to such of the Mentz citizens as had left the city, by the Elector Conrad III., but apparently he continued to live in Strasburg. Two years later he visited Mentz, probably about a pension granted by the magistrates to his widowed mother. This is practically all that is known of the earlier part of Gutenberg's life.

It is curious that nearly all the recorded information concerning Gutenberg is in connection either with lawsuits or with the raising of money. From the contracts for borrowing or repaying money into which he entered, we gather that he was always hard pressed, and that his invention ran away with a good deal of gold and paid back none. Gutenberg cast his bread on the waters, and it is we who have found it.

The first known event of his life which directly concerns our subject is a lawsuit brought against him by Georg Dritzehn. Mr. Hessels implies, though he does not actually state, that he suspects the authenticity of the records of this trial. But no proof of their falsity can be adduced, and the integrity of the documents otherwise remains unquestioned. They cannot now, however, be

subjected to further examination, for they were burnt in 1870 at the time of the siege of Strasburg.

The action in question was brought against Gutenberg in 1439 by Georg Dritzehn, the brother of one Andres Dritzehn, deceased, for the restitution of certain rights which he considered due to himself as his brother's heir. From the testimony of the witnesses as set down in the records of the trial, we gather that Gutenberg had entered into partnership with Hans Riffe, Andres Dritzehn, and Andres Heilmann; and one of the witnesses deposed that Dritzehn, on his death-bed, asserted that Gutenberg had concealed "several arts from them, which he was not obliged to show them." This did not please them, so they made a fresh arrangement with Gutenberg and further payments into the exchequer, to the end that Gutenberg "should conceal from them none of the arts he knew."

Again, Lorentz Beildeck testified that after Andres Dritzehn's death Gutenberg sent him to Claus, Andres' brother, to tell him "that he should not show to anyone the press which he had under his care," but that "he should take great care and go to the press and open this by means of two little buttons whereby the pieces would fall asunder. He should, thereupon, put those pieces in or on the press, after which nobody could see or comprehend anything."

Besides this, Hans Niger von Bischoviszheim said that Andres Dritzehn applied to him for a loan, and when witness asked him his occupation, answered that he was a maker of looking-glasses. Later on, a pilgrimage "to Aix-la-Chapelle about the looking-glasses" is mentioned.



By these records, from Mr. Hessels' translation of which the above quotations are taken, two things at least are made clear. First, that Gutenberg was in possession of the knowledge of an art unknown to his companions, which he was desirous of keeping to himself, and which those not in the secret wished to learn; and secondly, that a press containing some important and mysterious "pieces," which was not to be exhibited to outsiders until the pieces had been separated, played a prominent part in this secret work. The "looking-glasses," apparently, were imaginary, and intended for the misleading of too curious enquirers. But it has been ingeniously suggested that the word *spiegel*, or looking-glass, was a cryptic reference to the *Spiegel onser Behoudenisse*, or *Mirror of Salvation*, and that Gutenberg and his assistants were engaged in preparing the printed *Speculum* for sale at the forthcoming fair held on the occasion of the pilgrimages to Aix-la-Chapelle in 1439. This part of his plan, however, was frustrated by the postponement of the fair for a year.

It is hardly to be doubted that the researches privately conducted in the deserted convent of St. Arbogastus, where Gutenberg dwelt, concerned the great invention usually linked with his name. Were this probability an absolute certainty, then Strasburg might successfully dispute with Mentz the title of birthplace of the art of printing. But to what stage Gutenberg carried his labours in the old convent, or how far he proceeded towards the goal of his ambition, is not known, though it has been conjectured that possibly he and those in his confidence got as far as the making of matrices for types, and that

perhaps even the types used for the earliest extant specimens of type-printing were cast there, although not used until Gutenberg had returned to Mentz. On the other hand, there are many who think that matrices and punches are due to the ingenuity of Peter Schoeffer, to whom reference is made below.

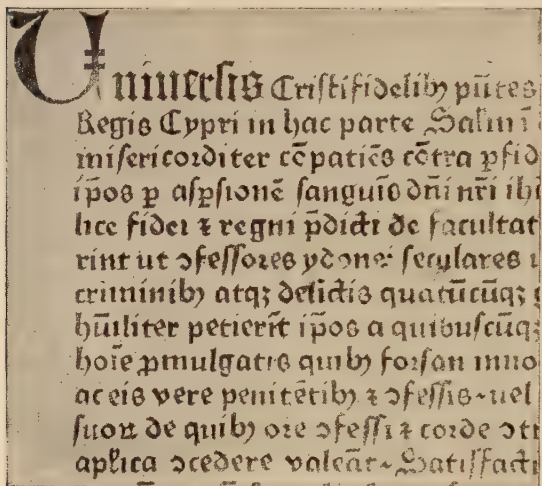
When Gutenberg left Strasburg for Mentz is not known, but he was in the latter city in 1448, as is testified by a deed relating to a loan which he had raised. His constant pecuniary difficulties resulted in his entering into partnership, in 1450, with the goldsmith Johann Fust, or Faust, a rich burgher of Mentz, who contributed large loans towards the working expenses, and was evidently to share in the profits of the press. Fust or Faust, the printer of Mentz, has sometimes been identified with the Faust of German legend. The dealings in the black art related of the one have also been ascribed to the other by various story-tellers, some of whom say that in Paris Faust the printer narrowly escaped being burnt as a wizard for selling books which looked like manuscripts, and yet were not manuscripts. The first printed letters, it should be observed, were exactly copied from the manuscript letters then in vogue.

The first really definite recorded event in the history of Gutenberg's printing was a lawsuit brought against him by Fust, in 1455, when Gutenberg had to give an account of the receipts and expenditure relating to his work, and to hand over to Fust all his apparatus in discharge of his debt. The partnership was of course dissolved, Gutenberg left Mentz, and Fust continued the printing assisted by Peter Schoeffer. Schoeffer

was a servant of Fust's, who had further associated himself with the establishment by marrying Fust's daughter, and to him some attribute the improvement of the methods then employed by devising matrices and punches for casting metal types. It has even been suggested that this device of his, communicated to Fust, induced the latter to rid himself of Gutenberg by demanding repayment of his advances when Gutenberg was unable to meet the call, and that having gained possession of his partner's apparatus, he was able, with the help of Schoeffer and his inventions, to carry on the work to his own profit and glory. But it is difficult to know whether to look upon Fust as a grasping and treacherous money-lender, or as a prudent and enterprising man of business. However this may be, at the time of the lawsuit the work of years was already perfected, printing with moveable types was now an accomplished thing, and the great Mazarin Bible, if not finished, was at any rate on the point of completion.

The earliest extant specimens of printing from types, however, are assigned to the year 1454. These are some Letters of Indulgence issued by Pope Nicholas V. to the supporters of the King of Cyprus in his war with the Turks. They consist of single sheets of vellum, printed on one side only, and measuring *c.* 11 × 7 inches. They fall into two classes, of each of which there were various issues; that is to say, (1) those containing thirty lines, and (2) those containing thirty-one lines. The thirty-line Indulgence is printed partly in the type used for the Mazarin Bible. The thirty-one-line Indulgence is partly printed in type which is the same as that used for books

printed by Albrecht Pfister at Bamberg, and for a Bible which disputes with the Mazarin Bible the position of the first printed book. Who printed these Indulgences is not certainly known. Both emanated from the Mentz press, and it is not unreasonable to believe that both were executed by



Type of the Mentz Indulgence (30-line, exact size).

Gutenberg, since the Mazarin Bible is most probably his work, and since the types used by Pfister were perhaps at one time possessed by Gutenberg. Still, the point is not clear, and the more general view is that they were the work of two different printers. Some attribute the thirty-line Indulgence to Schoeffer, on the ground that some of its initial letters are reproduced in an Indulgence

of 1489 known to be of Schoeffer's workmanship. Yet there seems no reason why Schoeffer in 1489 should not have made use of Gutenberg's types—indeed, it is very probable that he had every chance of doing so, as may be seen from the above account of the dissolution of partnership between Gutenberg and Fust.

Those who assign the thirty-line specimen to Schoeffer consider the thirty-one line specimen to be Gutenberg's work. "And though we have no proof of this," says Mr. E. Gordon Duff, who holds this view, "or indeed of Gutenberg's having printed any book at all, there is a strong weight of circumstantial evidence in his favour." It may be taken for granted, then, although proof is wanting, that Gutenberg printed at least one of these Indulgences, and perhaps both. In any case, these are the first productions of the printing-press to which a definite date can be assigned. Some of them have a printed date, and in other copies the date has been inserted in manuscript. The earliest specimens of each class belong to the year 1454.

The next production of the Mentz press, as is generally believed, is the beautiful volume known as the Gutenberg Bible, or the Mazarin Bible, because it was a copy in the library of Cardinal Mazarin which first attracted attention and led bibliographers to enquire into its history. It illustrates a most remarkable fact—that is, the extraordinary degree of perfection to which the art of printing attained all but simultaneously with its birth. Even though we cannot tell how long Gutenberg experimented before producing this book, it is none the less amazing that as a specimen of typographic art the Mazarin Bible

has never been excelled even by the cleverest printers and the most modern and elaborate apparatus. It was probably not begun before 1450, the year when Gutenberg and Fust joined forces, and was completed certainly not later than 1456. This latter date is fixed by a colophon written in the second volume of the copy in the Bibliothèque Nationale at Paris, which informs us that "this book was illuminated, bound, and perfected by Heinrich Cremer, vicar of the collegiate church of St. Stephen in Mentz, on the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin, in the year of our Lord 1456. Thanks be to God. Hallelujah." A similar note is affixed to the first volume.

It is believed by competent authorities that this and all very early printed books were printed one page at a time, owing to an inadequate supply of type, a process exceedingly slow and productive of numerous small variations in the text. The work of printing the Mazarin Bible was in all probability interrupted to allow of the execution of the more immediately needed Letters of Indulgence, in certain parts of which, as we have said, some of the types used in the Mazarin Bible are employed.

We must not omit to mention here another Bible issued from Mentz about this time. It has thirty-six lines to a column, and is therefore known as the thirty-six line Bible, in distinction to the forty-two line or Mazarin Bible. It exhibits a larger type, and is regarded by some as the first book printed at the Mentz press, and, for all that can be proved to the contrary, it is so. Although the point is still undecided, this volume may at any rate be safe-

ly regarded as contemporary with the Mazarin Bible.

The Mazarin Bible is in Latin, and printed in

de hebreis uoluntatibus addidit noue-  
rit equis usque ad duo pūda iuxta chro-  
nologia dūmtaxat. dīdōnī: qui sin-  
pliciter finōis a septuaginta in re-  
pētibz nō dīscordat. Hic ego et uo-  
bis et studio cuiq; facile me scire-  
nō ambigo multos fore: qui uel mul-  
dia uel superfluo ualente contemneret  
et uidet: pcedara quam dīscere: et de  
turbulento magis riuo quam de pu-  
ndino fōre potest. *Explicit prologus*  
*Incipit liber primus uel soliloquium*  
**B**eatus uir qui nō  
abijt in cōsilio im-  
piorū: et in uia pe-  
ccatorum nō stetit:  
et in carchēda pēti-  
lēne nō seduit. *Sed*  
*in lege domini uolūtas eius: et in lege*  
*suā meditabitur die ac nocte. Et erit*  
*tanq; lignū quod plāratum est leuē*  
*breuius aquarū: qđ fructū suū dabit*  
*in fructu suo. Et solus eius nō defluet: et*  
*dominia quęcūq; faciet prosperabūtur.*  
*Non sic impij nō sic: sed tanq; pul-  
uis quē proiecit uētus a facie ree. Et*  
*deo nō resurgūt impij i iudicio: neq;*  
*peccatores in cōsilio iustorū. Quoni-*  
*am nouit dominus uia iustorū: et iter*  
*iniquorū prābit. Beatus dauid*  
*uare tenuerūt gētes: et ipsi me-*  
*ditati sunt inania: et libenter*  
*reges terre et principes cōuerserunt in*  
*uini: adūsus dām et adūsū cōbū rō.*  
*Dirimunt uindicta eos: et pīam*  
*a nobis iugū iporū. Qui habet ac-*  
*lis irascit eos: et dūs subleuabit eos.*  
*Tunc loquet ad eos in ira sua: et in*  
*furore suo cōturbabit eos. Ego au-*  
*tem cōstatū sum rex ab eo super syon*  
*montem sanctū rō: pōicēs pceptū*  
*eius. Omnis dīx ad me sūus*

meo rex tu: ego habeo genua. *Po-*  
*stula a me et dabo tibi gratas hēdē-*  
*retū tuā: et possessionē tuā minuo*  
*reer. Reges eos i iurga lēta: et tan-*  
*q; uos reguli cōtinges eos. Et nūc*  
*reges intelligit: cōdūmū i iudica-*  
*tiō rēd. Seruē dūs i rīnōre: et q-*  
*ultate n cū cōuere. Et pcedat dī-*  
*sciplinam: ne quīdō irascat dōm-*  
*inus et pērtas de uia iusta. Qui re-*  
*arēt in brui ira dūs: brāi amaro*  
*qui cōstāt in eo. Beatus dauid*  
*nō defuit a facie ad solon filij sui.*

**D**omine qđ multiplicasti me qui  
tribulasti me: multi insurgūt ad-  
uersum me. *Quia dīx anīx uer:*  
*nō est salus ipsi in deo rūs. Tu autē*  
*dūc susceper me rō: gloriā meā et*  
*alōis caput meū. Uox meā ad bo-*  
*minū clamaui: et exaudīuit me de mō-*  
*te sādō suo. Ego dormiui et soporā-*  
*lura: et exurrexi quia dūs suscipit me.*  
*Non timebo milia populi cōceden-*  
*tis me: exurge dūc saluē me fac deus*  
*meus. Quoniam tu pressisti omēs*  
*adūsantes michi sicut caula: dentēs*  
*peccatorū cōtrīuisti. Omīni est salū:*  
*et super populū tuū benedictio tua.*  
*Et finem in cōmibus. psalmus dauid*

**Q**um inuocasti exaudīuit me deus  
iudicē me: i tribulatione dila-  
tasti michi. *Et dīscere uiri: et exaudi o-*  
*rationē meā. Et tūc tūc uirū quē*  
*graui cor: ut quid diligēs uanitatē*  
*meā et querēs mēdām? Et scire*  
*quoniam notiticanit dūs sādū suū:*  
*dūs exaudīuit me cū clamaui ad rō.*  
*Et caltemini et nolite peccare: qui di-*  
*cūs in cordibus uestis in pūbilibz*  
*uestis cōpūngimini. Sacerdote*  
*sacerdotū iudice et sperate in domino.*  
*Multi dicunt qđ ostendit nobis bonā.*

Page from the Mazarin Bible (reduced).

the characters known as Gothic, or black letter. These were closely modelled on the form of the



handwriting used at that time for Bibles and kindred works. It is in two volumes, and each page, excepting a few at the beginning, has two columns of forty-two lines, and each is provided with rubrics, inserted by hand, while the small initials of the sentences have a touch of red, also put in by hand. Some copies are of vellum, others of paper. But henceforward the use of vellum declines.

**D**omine qđ multiplicati  
tribulāt me: multi in  
versum me. Multi dicūt an  
nō est salus ipsi in deo eius.  
Dñe susceptor me: es: gloriā  
altā caput meū. Voce in  
mīnū clamaui: ⁊ exaudiuit  
te sādō suo. Ergo domini ⁊  
lum: ⁊ exsurrexi quia dñs su

Type of the Mazarin Bible (exact size).

The Mazarin Bible is usually considered to be the joint work of Gutenberg and Fust. Mr. Winter Jones has conjectured that the metal types used in early printing were cut by the goldsmiths, and that Fust's skill, as well as his money, were pressed into Gutenberg's service.



But if, as some have thought, Fust provided money only, while Gutenberg was the working partner, then Fust would hardly have been concerned in its actual production until 1455, when he and Gutenberg separated. Even then—supposing the book to have been still unfinished—it is quite possible that Schoeffer did the work. But no one is able to decide the exact parts played by those three associated and most noted printers of Mentz; conjecture alone can allot them.

Gutenberg returned to Mentz in 1456, and made a fresh start, aided financially by Dr. Conrad Homery. Here again we are confronted with a want of direct evidence, and can point to no books as certainly being the work of Gutenberg. But there are good reasons for believing that under this new arrangement, he printed the *Catholicon*, or Latin grammar and dictionary, of John of Genoa; the *Tractatus rationis et conscientie* of Matthæus de Cracovia; *Summa de articulis fidei* of Aquinas; and an Indulgence of 1461. There is a colophon to the *Catholicon* which may possibly have been written by Gutenberg, which runs as follows:—

“By the assistance of the Most High, at Whose will the tongues of children become eloquent, and Who often reveals to babes what He hides from the wise, this renowned book, the *Catholicon*, was printed and perfected in the year of the Incarnation 1460, in the beloved city of Mentz (which belongs to the illustrious German nation, whom God has consented to prefer and to raise with such an exalted light of the mind and free grace, above the other nations of the earth), not by means of reed, stile, or pen, but

by the admirable proportion, harmony, and connection of the punches and types." A metrical doxology follows.

A few other and smaller works have also been believed to have been executed by Gutenberg at this time, but with no certainty.

In 1465 Gutenberg was made one of the gentlemen of the court to Adolph II., Count of Nassau and Archbishop of Mentz, and presumably abandoned his printing on acceding to this dignity. In 1467 or 1468 Gutenberg died, and thus ends the meagre list of facts which we have concerning the life and career of the first printer.

To nearly every question which we might wish to ask about Gutenberg and his work, one of two answers has to be given—"It is not known," or "Perhaps." He does not speak for himself, and none of his personal acquaintance, or his family, if he had any, speak for him. We have no reason to believe that his work brought him any particular honour, and certainly it brought him no wealth. It has been suggested, however, that the post offered to him by the Archbishop was in recognition of his invention, since there is no other reason apparent why the dignity was conferred. But we may well conclude this account of Gutenberg with De Vinne's words, that "there is no other instance in modern history, excepting, possibly, Shakespeare, of a man who did so much and said so little about it."

Fust, the former partner of Gutenberg, died in 1466, leaving a son to succeed him in the partnership with Schoeffer, and Schoeffer died about 1502. Of his three sons (all printers), the eldest,

Johann, continued to work at Mentz until about 1533.

The most notable books issued by Fust and Schoeffer were the Psalter of 1457, and the Latin Bible of 1462. The Bible of 1462 is the first Bible with a date. The Psalter of 1457 is famous as being the first printed Psalter, the first printed book with a date, the first example of printing in colours, the first book with a printed colophon, and the first printed work containing musical notes, though these last are not printed but inserted by hand.\* The colour printing is shown by the red and blue initials, but by what process they were executed has been the subject of much discussion. They are generally supposed to have been added after the rest of the page had been printed, by means of a stamp. The colophon is written in the curious Latin affected by the early printers, and Mr. Pollard offers the following as a rough rendering:—

“The present book of Psalms, adorned with beauty of capitals, and sufficiently marked out with rubrics, has been thus fashioned by an ingenious invention of printing and stamping, and to the worship of God diligently brought to completion by Johann Fust, a citizen of Mentz, and Peter Schoffer of Gernsheim, in the year of our Lord, 1457, on the Vigil of the Feast of the Assumption.”

These two printers also produced, in 1465, an edition of the *De Officiis* of Cicero, which shares with the *Lactantius*, printed in the same year at

---

\* The first printed musical notes appear in de Gerson's *Collectorium super Magnificat*, printed at Esslingen in 1473 by Conrad Fyner.

Subiaco, near Rome, by Sweynheim and Pannartz, the honour of exhibiting to the world the first Greek types, and with the same printers' Cicero *De Oratore*, that of being the first printed Latin classic, unless an undated *De Officiis*, printed at Cologne by Ulrich Zel about this time, is the real "first."

## CHAPTER IX.

### EARLY PRINTING.

WHEREVER typography originated, it was from Mentz that it was taught to the world. The disturbances in that city in 1462 drove many of its citizens from their homes, and the German printers were thus dispersed over Europe. Within a little more than twenty years from the time of the first issue from the Mentz printing-press, other presses were established at Strasburg, Bamberg, Cologne, Augsburg, Nuremburg, Spire, Ulm, Lubeck, and Breslau; Basle; Rome, Venice, Florence, Naples, and many other Italian cities; Paris and Lyons; Bruges; and, in 1477, at Westminster.

Before the end of the fifteenth century eighteen European countries were printing books. Italy heads the list with seventy-one cities in which presses were at work, Germany follows with fifty, France with thirty-six, Spain with twenty-six, Holland with fourteen; and after these England's four printing-places—Westminster, London, Oxford, and St. Albans—make a somewhat small show. Some other countries, however, had

but one printing-town. With the possible exception of Holland, England and Scotland are the only countries which are indebted to a native and not (as in every case save that of Ireland) to a German for the introduction of printing.

The early printers were more than mere workmen. They were usually editors and publishers as well. Some of them were associated with scholars who did the editorial work: Sweynheim and Pannartz, for instance, the first to set up a press in Italy, had the benefit of the services of the Bishop of Aleria, and their rival, Ulrich Hahn, enjoyed for a while the assistance of the celebrated Campanus. Aldus Manutius, too, the founder of the Aldine press at Venice, though himself a literary man and a learned editor, availed himself of the help of several Greek scholars in the revising and correcting of classical texts. The exact relations of these editors to the printers, however, is not known. The English printer, Caxton, who also was a scholar, usually, though not invariably, edited his publications himself.

The first printers were also booksellers, and sold other people's books as well as their own. Several of their catalogues or advertisements still exist. The earliest known book advertisements are some issued by Peter Schoeffer, one, dating from about 1469, giving a list of twenty-one books for sale by himself or his agents in the several towns where he had established branches of his business, and another advertising an edition of St. Jerome's *Epistles* published by Schoeffer at Mentz in 1470. An advertisement by Caxton is also extant, and being short, as well as interesting, may be quoted here. It is as follows:—

If it plesse ony man spirituel or temporel to  
 hve ony pyes,\* of two and thre comemoracios  
 of salisbury vse enpryntid after the forme of  
 this preset lettre whiche ben wel and truly  
 correct, late hym come to westmonester in to the  
 almonesrpe at the reed pale and he shal haue  
 them good chepe.

*Supplicio stet cedula.*

The date of this notice is about 1477 or 1478. Other extant examples of early advertisements are those of John Mentelin, a Strasburg printer, issued about 1470, and of Antony Koburger, of Nuremberg, issued about ten years later. In 1495 Koburger advertised the Nuremberg Chronicle.

Early printed books exhibit a very limited range of subject, and were hardly ever used to introduce a new contemporary writer. Theology and jurisprudence in Germany, and the classics in Italy, inaugurated the new invention, and lighter fare was not served to the patrons of printed literature until a later date. Italy made the first departure, and took up history, romance, and poetry. France began with the classics, and then neglected them for romances and more popular works, but at the same time became noted for the beautifully illuminated service-books produced at Paris and Rouen, and which supplied the clergy of both France and England. England, who received printing twelve years after Italy and seven years after France, made more variety in her books than any. Caxton's pro-

---

\* The Pye, or Pica, directed how saints'-days falling in Lent, Easter, Whitsuntide, and the octave of Trinity, were to be observed with respect to the "commemorations" of these seasons.

ductions consist of works dealing with subjects of wider interest, even if less learned and improving—romances, chess, good manners, *Æsop's Fables*, the *Canterbury Tales*, and the *Adventures of Reynard the Fox*.

From what sort of type the Bible, usually considered to be the first printed book, was produced is not known. Some competent authorities think that wooden types were used. Others are in favour of metal, and, like the late Mr. Winter Jones, scout the notion of wooden types and consider them "impossible things." But Skeen, in his *Early Typography*, declares that hard wood would print better than soft lead, such as Blades hints that Caxton's types were made of, and to illustrate the possibility of wooden types prints a word in Gothic characters from letters cut in boxwood. The objections made to types of this nature are that they would be too weak to bear the press, could never stand washing and cleaning, and would swell when wet and shrink when dried. Some have thought that the early types were made by stamping half-molten metal with wooden punches, and so forming matrices from which the types were subsequently cast.

As we have already noticed in connection with the Mazarin Bible, the forms of the types were copied from the Gothic or black letter characters in which Bibles, psalters, and missals were then written. When Roman type was first cut is uncertain. The "R" printer of Strasburg, whose name is unknown, and whose works are dated only by conjecture, may have been the first to use it. It was employed by Sweynheim and Pannartz in 1467, and by the first printers in Paris and Venice. It was brought to the greatest perfec-

tion by Nicolas Jenson, a Frenchman working in Venice. Caxton never employed it, and it was not introduced into England until 1509. In that year Richard Pynson, a London printer and a naturalised Englishman, though Norman by birth, used some Roman type in portions of the *Sermo Fratris Hieronymi de Ferrara*, and in 1518 he produced *Oratio Ricardi Pacaei*, which was entirely printed in these characters.

Had the idea of the title-page, in the modern sense of the term, a very obvious idea, as it seems to us, occurred to the first printers, we should not have to sharpen our wits on the hundred and one doubtful points with which the subject of early bibliography bristles. To-day, the title-page not only introduces the book itself, but declares the name of the writer and the publisher, and the time and place of publication. But during the first sixty years of printing title-pages were rare, and the old methods followed by the scribes in writing their manuscript books still obtained. The subject matter began with "Incipit" or "Here beginneth," etc., according to the language in which the work was written, and such information as the printer considered it desirable to impart was contained in the colophon, or note affixed to the end of the book.

More often than not these colophons are irritatingly reticent, and withhold the very thing we want to know. At other times they are informing, and in some cases amusing. Dr. Garnett has suggested that as a literary pastime some one might do worse than collect fifteenth-century colophons into a volume, for the sake of their biographical and personal interest, but I am not aware that his idea has been carried out. Two



colophons have already been quoted here, the first printed colophon (see p. 97), and one which is possibly from the pen of Gutenberg (see p. 95). A quaint specimen found in a volume of Cicero's *Orationes Philippicæ*, printed at Rome by Ulrich Hahn, about 1470, descends to puns. It is in Latin verse, and supposed by some to have been written by Cardinal Campanus, who edited several of Hahn's publications. It informs the descendants of the Geese who saved the Capitol that they need have no more fear for their feathers, for the art of Ulrich the *Cock* (German *Hahn* = Latin *Gallus* = English *Cock*) will provide a potent substitute for quills. A colophon to Cicero's *Epistolæ Familiares*, printed at Venice in 1469 by Joannes de Spira, declares with pardonable pride that he had printed two editions of three hundred copies in four months.

The first book with any attempt at a title-page is the *Sermo ad Populum Predicabilis*, printed at Cologne in 1470 by Arnold Therhoernen, but a full title-page was not generally adopted till fifty years later. The first English title-page is very brief, and reads as follows :—

**A passing gode lityll boke necessarpe & helpefull agenst the Pestilence.**

This gode lityll boke, written by Canutus, Bishop of Aarhaus, was printed in London about 1482 by Machlinia. A later development of the title-page was a full-page woodcut, headed by the name of the work, as in the **Kynge Richarde cuer du lyon**, printed in 1528 by Wynkyn de Worde. The same woodcut does duty in another of the same printer's books for Robert the Devil.

Early title-pages in Latin sometimes render the names of familiar places of publication in a very unfamiliar form. London may appear as Augusta Trinobantum, Edinburgh as Aneda, Dublin as Eblana. Some towns are easily recognised by their Latin names, such as Roma or Venetiæ; others are less obvious, such as Moguntia, or Mentz; Lutetia, or Paris; Argentina, or Strasburg. Several places had more than one Latin form of name. London, for example, was Londinum, and Edinburgh, Edemburgem.

Pagination, or numbering of the pages, was first introduced by Arnold Therhoernen, in the same book in which he gives us the first title-page, and to which reference has already been made. He did not place the figures at the top corner, however, but in the centre of the right-hand margin.

The practice of printing the first word of a leaf at the foot of the leaf preceding, as a guide for the arrangement of the sheets, was first employed by Vindelinius de Spira, of Venice, in the *Tacitus* which he printed about 1469.

## CHAPTER X.

### EARLY PRINTING IN ITALY AND SOME OTHER COUNTRIES.

THE new invention found more favour in Italy than in any other country, for more presses were established there than anywhere else. The printers, however, were all Germans, and before 1480 about 110 German typographers were at

work in twenty-seven Italian cities. They kept the secrets of their trade well to themselves, and not till 1471 was any printing executed by an Italian. In May of that year the *De Medicinis Universalibus* of Mesua was executed at Venice

**N**on igr̃ īnascēē. qđ fieri nō p  
et p̃oris m̃re factorūq; oīm ī  
st: ac fruētes iocūditate īnumerābīl  
ōmē deleuerit: qđ eos ad regnū m̃ta  
philosophi quoq; dicer̃ aliqd conat  
ras trāsire aīas ī noua corpa dīspūt  
ex pecudībus ī hoīes. et se īp̃m ex E  
quē Cicero aīc fulcīr porticū stoīcoz  
ī nouatōe mūdi loqueret̃: hēc īmāliū  
διηλωσ ονδερ αδϋματο

Type of the Subiaco Lactantius (exact size).

by Clement of Padua, who accomplished the truly wonderful feat of teaching himself how to print. Another Italian, Joannes Phillipus de Lignamine, printed at Rome some time before July 26, 1471, and it is therefore uncertain whether he or Clement of Padua was the first native printer of Italy.

The first press established in Italy was that set up in the Benedictine monastery of St. Scholas-

tica at Subiaco, a few miles from Rome, by two German typographers, Conrad Sweynheim and Arnold Pannartz. There they issued Cicero's *De Oratore* in 1465, the first book printed in Italy. In their petition to the Pope, referred to below, they say that they had printed a *Donatus*, presumably before the Cicero, but no such work is known, and some have thought it was only a block-book. In the same year they issued the works of Lactantius, "the Christian Cicero," the first dated book executed in Italy. It is also one of the earliest books to adopt a more elaborate punctuation than the simple oblique line and full stop in general use. The *Lactantius* has a colon, full stop, and notes of admiration and interrogation. Both these books are printed in a pleasing type which is neither Gothic nor Roman, but midway between the two.

Two years later Sweynheim and Pannartz removed to Rome, where their countryman, Ulrich Hahn, was already at work, and prosecuted their business with so much energy, and apparently so little prudence or regard to the works of other printers, that at the end of five years they had printed no less than 12,475 sheets which they could not sell, and were in such financial straits that they petitioned the Pope for assistance for themselves and their families. Whether they obtained it is unknown, but the partnership was soon after dissolved, and the name of Pannartz alone appears in books of 1475 and 1476. When these two printers died is uncertain.

Venice was the next city of Italy to take up the new art. There, in 1469, Joannes de Spira, or John of Spires, executed Cicero's *Epistolæ ad Familiares*. He obtained a privilege from

the Venetian Senate with regard to his productions, and, more than that, a monopoly of book-printing in Venice for five years. He died, however, less than a year later, and his monopoly with him. His brother Vindelinus carried on his work, and was succeeded by Nicolas Jenson, a Frenchman, who, from a technical point of view, was perhaps the most skilful and artistic of early typographers.

The most famous printer of Venice, however, and the most famous printer of Italy, and perhaps of the world, is Aldus Manutius, born in 1450, but his fame rests less on his actual printing, which, though good, is not unequalled, than upon the efforts he made for popularising literature, and bringing cheap, yet well-produced books within the reach of the many. He saw that the works printed in such numbers by the Venetian printers, who paid attention to quantity and cheapness and altogether ignored the quality of their productions, were faulty and corrupt, and that textually as well as typographically there was room for improvement. He applied himself to the study of the classics, above all to the Greek, hitherto neglected or published through Latin translations, and secured the assistance of many eminent scholars, and then, having obtained good texts, turned his thoughts to type and format. The types he cast for his first book, Lascaris' *Greek Grammar*, were superior to the Greek types then in use. Next he designed a new Roman type, modelled, so it is said, upon the handwriting of Petrarch. It called forth admiration, and won fame under the name of the "Aldino" type. Its use has continued to the present day, and it is known to almost everyone as *Italic*. It was cut by Fran-

cesco de Bologna, who was probably identical with Francesco Raibolini, that painter-goldsmith who signed himself on his pictures as *Aurifex*, and on his gold-work as *Pictor*.

The advantage of the Aldino type, at the time of its invention, when type was large and

**I**lle meas errare boues, ut cernis, et ipsum  
**L**udere, quæ uellem, calamo permisit agresti.  
**N**on equidem in uideo, miror magis, undiq; totis Me.  
**V**sque adeo turbatur agris: eni ipse apellas  
**P**rotinus æger ago, hanc etiam uix Tityre ducō.  
**H**ic inter densas corylos modo nãq; gemellos,  
**S**pem gregis ab ilice in nuda connixa reliquit.  
**S**æpe malum hoc nobis, si mens non leua fuisset,  
**D**e celo tactas memini prædicere quercus.  
**S**æpe sinistra cava prædixit ab ilice cornix.  
**S**ed tamen, iste deus qui sit, da Tityre nobis.  
**V**rbem, quam dicunt Romam, Melibæe putavi Ti,  
**S**tulus ego huic nostræ similem, quo sæpe solemus  
a ii

Type of the Aldine Virgil, 1501 (exact size).

required a comparatively great deal of space, was that its size and form permitted the printed matter to be much compressed, while losing nothing in clearness. The book for which it was used could be made smaller, and printed more cheaply. In 1501 Aldus inaugurated his new type by issuing a *Virgil* printed throughout in "Aldino." It occupied two hundred and twenty-eight leaves, and was of a neat and novel shape, measuring just six by three and a half inches.

This book, which was sold for about two shillings of our money, marks Aldus as the pioneer of cheap literature—literature not for the wealthy alone, but for all who loved books. A proof of the popularity of the new departure is afforded by the fact that the *Virgil* was immediately forged, that is to say, reproduced in a number of exceedingly inferior copies, by an unknown printer of Lyons.

The Aldine mark, which appears on Aldus' edition of Dante's *Terze Rime* in 1502, and on nearly all the numerous works subsequently issued from this famous press, is a dolphin twined about an anchor, and the name ALDVS divided by the upper part of the anchor. This device continued to be used after the death of Aldus Manutius in 1515 by his descendants, who carried on the work of the press until 1597.

France was somewhat late in availing herself of the advantages offered by the new art, although Peter Schoeffer had had a bookseller's shop in Paris. In 1470, Guillaume Fichet, Rector of the Sorbonne, invited three German printers—Ulric Gering, Michael Friburger, and Martin Cranz—to come and set up a printing-press at the Sorbonne. The first work they produced there was the *Epistolæ* of Gasparinus Barzizius. For this and a few other volumes they used a very beautiful Roman type, but after the closing of the Sorbonne press in 1472 they established other presses elsewhere in Paris and adopted a Gothic character similar to that of the contemporary French manuscripts, and therefore more likely to be popular with French readers.

The first work printed in the French language, however, is believed to have been executed,

chiefly, at any rate, by an Englishman, probably at Bruges, five years later, that is, about 1476. The book was *Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes*, the Englishman was William Caxton. Caxton also printed at the same place, and about the year 1475, the first book in the English language—a translation of *Le Recueil*. In both these works he may have been assisted by Colard Mansion, believed by some to have been his typographical tutor, though so eminent an authority as Mr. Blades holds that *Le Recueil* was printed by Mansion alone, and that Caxton had no hand in it. As with so many other questions concerning early typography, there seems to be no means of deciding the point.

The first work in French which was issued in Paris was the *Grands Chroniques de France*, by Pasquier Bonhomme in 1477.

Holland and the Low Countries can show no printed book with a date earlier than 1473, while the celebrated city of Haarlem's first dated book was produced ten years later. But printing was very possibly practised in these countries at an earlier period, and some undated books exist which those who ascribe the invention of typography to Holland consider to have been executed by Dutch printers before any German books had been given to the world. Those who stand by Germany of course think otherwise.

In the year just named—1473—Nycolaum Ketelaer and Gerard de Leempt produced Peter Comestor's *Historia Scholastica* at Utrecht, and Alost and Louvain also started printing. The types of John Veldener, the first Louvain printer, have a great resemblance to those used by Caxton, and have led some to believe that Veldener



supplied Caxton with the types he first used at Westminster. About the same time, Colard Mansion, noted for his association either as teacher or assistant with Caxton, is supposed to have introduced printing into Bruges. His first dated book was a *Boccaccio* of 1476, and he continued to print until 1484, when he issued a fine edition, in French, of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*. After this nothing more is known of him. Blades thinks that his printing brought him financial ruin, and suggests that he may have joined his old friend Caxton at Westminster, and helped him in his work, but this is only conjecture. We have already seen that it was from Colard Mansion's press that the first printed books in the English and French languages were produced.

The first Brussels press was established by the Brethren of the Common Life, a community who had hitherto made a specialty of the production of manuscript books. At what date they began to print in Brussels is uncertain, but their first dated book, the *Gnotosolitos sive speculum conscientiae*, is of the year 1476. The Brethren also had an earlier press at Marienthal, near Mentz, and subsequently set up others at Rostock, Nuremberg, and Gouda.

The Elzevirs belong to a somewhat later period than that with which we are concerned in these chapters, but a name so famous in bibliographical annals as theirs cannot well be passed over. The first of the Elzevirs was Louis, a native of Louvain, who in 1580 established a book-shop in Leyden, gained the patronage of the university, and opened an important trade with foreign countries. Certain of his sons and successors became printers as well as booksellers, and pro-

duced work of the highest excellence. Some of them opened shops or set up presses at Amsterdam, The Hague, and Utrecht, and also established agencies or branches elsewhere, and extended their trade all over Europe. The history of the partnerships between different members of the family, and of the sixteen hundred and odd publications which they printed or sold, is a complicated subject upon which there is no need to enter here. The last of the Elzevirs, a degenerate great-great-grandson of the first Louis Elzevir, was Abraham Elzevir, of Leyden, who died in 1712, leaving no heir, and at whose decease the press and apparatus were sold.

## CHAPTER XI.

### EARLY PRINTING IN ENGLAND.

THE first name on the list of early English printers, it is hardly necessary to say, is that of Caxton. In his *Life and Typography of William Caxton*, the late Mr. Blades has told all there is to be known of Caxton's life, and a great deal about Caxton's work; and although as regards the latter half of the subject there are authorities who dissent from some of the theories he advances, Mr. Blades' monograph remains the standard work on the matter of England's first printer and the recognised source of information concerning him and his books.

But notwithstanding Mr. Blades' industry and learning, our knowledge of the early part of Caxton's life is very scanty, and is derived mainly

from what Caxton himself tells us in the prologue to his first literary production, the English translation of the French romance by Le Fevre, entitled *Le Recueil des Histoires de Troyes*, or, Anglicised, *The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye*. Speaking of his boldness in undertaking the work, he refers to the "symplenes and vnperfightness that I had in both languages, that is to wete in frenshe and in englissh, for in france was I neuer, and was born & lerned myn englissh in kente in the weeld where I doubte not is spoken as brode and rude englissh as is in ony place of england." He was born probably in 1422 or 1423, and further than this we know nothing of him till his apprenticeship to Robert Large, a London mercer. Large died before Caxton's term of apprenticeship expired, and the next we hear of young Caxton is that he was living on the Continent, probably at Bruges. At the time he wrote the prologue from which quotation has just been made, that is about 1475, he had been for thirty years "for the most parte in the contres of Brabant, flanders, holand, and zeland." Yet notwithstanding so long a residence in the Low Countries, he describes himself as "mercier of y<sup>e</sup> cyte of London."

As a wool merchant in Bruges he prospered, and in time rose to be Governor of the Company of Merchant Adventurers, or "The English Nation," and in that capacity probably dwelt at the *Domus Angliæ*, the Company's headquarters in Bruges. In 1468, and while holding this honourable and important position, he began his translation of *Le Recueil*, but soon laid it aside, unfinished. Two years later he took it up again, but by this time he had resigned the

governorship, and was engaged in the service of the Duchess of Burgundy, sister of Edward IV. of England. When or why he took this position, and in what capacity he served the Duchess, is not known, but it was her influence which brought about the completion of his literary work and indirectly caused the subsequent metamorphosis of the mercer into the typographer. In the prologue to *The Recuyell* he relates that the duchess commanded him to finish the translation which he had begun, and this lady's "dredefull comādemēt," he says, "y durste in no wyse disobey because y am a servāt vnto her sayde grace and resseiw of her yerly ffee and other many goode and grete benefetes."

*The Recuyell of the Histories of Troye*, when finished, immediately found favour in the eyes of the English dwellers in Bruges, who, rejoiced to have the favourite romance of the day in their own tongue, demanded more copies than one pair of hands could supply. So because of the weariness and labour of writing, and because of his promise to various friends to provide them with the book, "I haue practysed & lerned," he tells us, "at my grete charge and dispense, to ordeyne this said book in prynte after the maner & forme as ye may here see, and is not wretton with penne and ynke, as other bokes ben, to thende that every man may haue them attones."

Where Caxton gained his knowledge of printing is a matter of dispute. Mr. Blades holds that he was taught by Colard Mansion, the first printer of Bruges, others that he learned at Cologne. Mr. Blades adduces in support of his view the similarity of the types of Mansion and Caxton, the reproduc-

tion in Caxton's work of various peculiarities to be observed in Mansion's, the improbability that Caxton would have travelled to Cologne to get what was already at hand in the city where he lived, and the absence in his work "of any typographical link between him and the Mentz school." For the Cologne theory Wynkyn de Worde, who carried on the work of Caxton's printing-office at Westminster after the latter's death, supplies some foundation in his edition of Bartholomæus *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, where he says:

"And also of your charyte call to remembrance

The soule of William Caxton, the first prynter of this boke

In laten tongue at Coleyn, hymself to avaunce,

That every well-disposed man may thereon loke."

As usual there is something to be said on both sides, but leaving this debateable ground we will only add that the *Recuyell of the Historyes of Troye*, translated by himself from the French, is generally considered to be the first book printed by Caxton, perhaps with Mansion's help, and probably at Bruges, and in or about the year 1475. It is also the first printed book in English. It was followed about 1476 by the French version of the same work, and by the famous *Game and Play of the Chesse Moralised*. This was once believed to be the first book printed on English soil, but it is now assigned to Caxton's press on the Continent, probably at Bruges.

About 1476 Caxton returned to England, and set up his press at Westminster. It has been asserted that he worked in the scriptorium, but it is not known that Westminster Abbey ever had a

scriptorium. Others have thought that he printed in some other part of the Abbey. His office, however, was situated in the Almonry, in the Abbey precincts, and was called the Red Pale, but it is now impossible to identify the place where it stood. In 1477 Caxton produced *The Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophres*, the first book, so far as is known, ever printed in England.

**H**ere endeth the booke  
of the philosophhres  
Caxton at Westmes  
CCCC. Lxxvii. Whiche boe  
freenshe into englyssh . by the  
Lord? Antone Erle of Ryur  
Ile of Wyght, Defendour an  
tolique, for our holy Fader t  
Englond? and? Bouernour

Type of Caxton's *Dictes or Sayengis of the Philosophres*,  
Westminster, 1477 (exact size).

The Westminster printer was patronised by the king and by the mighty of the land, and also by the Duchess of Burgundy, and with his pen, as well as with his press, he sought to supply the books and literature which the taste of the time demanded. "The clergy wanted service-books,"

says Mr. Blades, "and Caxton accordingly provided them with psalters, commemorations and directories; the preachers wanted sermons, and were supplied with the 'Golden Legend,' and other similar books; the 'prynces, lordes, barons, knyghtes & gentilmen' were craving for 'joyous and pleysaunt historyes' of chivalry, and the press at the 'Red Pale' produced a fresh romance nearly every year." From his arrival at Westminster about 1476 until his death about 1491—the date is not exactly known—Caxton was continually occupied in translating, editing, and printing, though beyond the prologues, epilogues, and colophons to his various publications he composed little himself, his principal work being the addition of a book to Higden's *Polychronicon*, bringing that history down to 1460. His translations number twenty-two.

The long list of his printed works includes a *Horæ*, printed about 1478, and now represented only by a fragment, which is of great interest as being probably the earliest English-printed service-book extant. It was found in the cover of another old book, and is now in the Bodleian Library.

Other books printed by Caxton were the *Canterbury Tales*; *Boethius*; *Parvus et Magnus Catho*, a mediæval school-book, the third edition of which contains two woodcuts, probably the earliest produced in England; *The Historye of Reynart the Foxe*, translated from the Dutch by Caxton; *A Book of the Chesse Moralyzed*, a second edition of the *Game and Play of the Chesse*, printed by Caxton abroad; *The Cronicles of Englonde*; *The Pylgremage of the Sowle*, believed to have been translated from the French by Lydgate; Gower's



*Confessio Amantis* ; *The Knyght of the Toure*, translated by Caxton from the French; *The Golden Legend*, consisting of lives of saints compiled by Caxton from French and Latin texts; *The Fables of Esope*, etc., translated by Caxton from the



Boys learning grammar, from Caxton's "Catho" and "Mirrour of the World."

French; Chaucer's *Book of Fame* ; *Troylus and Creside* ; Malory's *Morte d'Arthur* ; *The Book of Good Manners*, translated by Caxton from the French of Jacques Legrand; *Statutes of Henry VII.*, in English, the "earliest known volume of printed statutes"; *The Governal of Helthe*, from



the Latin, author and translator unknown, the "earliest medical work printed in English"; *Divers Ghostly Matters*, including tracts on the seven points of true love and everlasting wisdom, the Twelve Profits of Tribulation, and the Rule of St. Benet; *The Fifteen Oes and other Prayers*, printed by command of "our liege ladi Elizabeth . . . Quene of Englonde, and of the . . . pryn-cesse Margarete," and the "prouffitable boke for mānes soule and right comfortable to the body and specyally in aduersitee and trybulacyon, whiche boke is called *The Chastysing of Goddes Chyldern*."

Between seventy and eighty different books, besides indulgences and other small productions, are attributed to Caxton's press, and the works just named will serve to give an idea of their diversity and range. Some of the most popular were printed more than once; of the *Golden Legend*, for example, three editions are known, and of the *Dictes or Sayings*, the *Horæ*, and *Parvus et Magnus Catho*, and several others, two editions are known. There is also a strong probability that many of Caxton's productions have been lost altogether, since thirty-eight of those yet extant are represented either by single copies or by fragments.

Caxton, according to Mr. Blades, used six different founts of Gothic type, but Mr. E. Gordon Duff, in his *Early English Printing*, credits him with eight founts. His books are all printed on paper, with the exception of a copy of the *Speculum Vitæ Christi* in the British Museum, and one of the *Doctrinal of Sapience*, in the Royal Library at Windsor Castle.

The well-known device of Caxton was not

used by him till 1487. It is usually understood to stand for W.C. 74, but its exact meaning is not known. Blades believes that it refers to the



Caxton's device.

date of printing of *The Recuyell*, the first product of Caxton's typographical skill.

In 1480, three or four years after Caxton had settled at Westminster, John Lettou, a foreigner of whom little is known, established the first

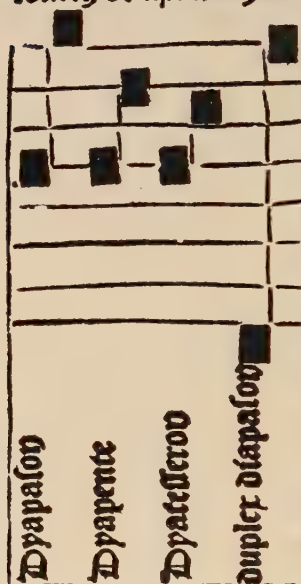
London printing-press.\* His workmanship was particularly good, and he was the first in Great Britain to print two columns to the page. He subsequently took into partnership William de Machlinia, and according to the colophon of their *Tenores Novelli* the office of these two printers was located in the Church of All Saints', but this piece of information is too vague to assist in the identification of the spot. Machlinia is afterwards found working alone in an office near the Flete Bridge. His later books were printed in Holborn.

A well-known name is that of Wynkyn de Worde, a native of Holland, and at one time assistant to Caxton. At Caxton's death he became master of the Red Pale, and issued a number of books "from Caxton's house in Westminster," including reprints of several of Caxton's publications. He made use of some modified forms of Caxton's device, but he also had a device of his own, which first appears in the *Book of Courtesye* printed some time before 1493. He printed, among other works, the *Golden Legend*, the *Book of Courtesye*, Bonaventura's *Speculum Vitæ Christi*, Higden's *Polychronicon*, which appeared in 1495 and is the first English book with printed musical notes; Bartholomæus *De Proprietatibus Rerum*, which appeared about 1495 and is the first book printed on English-made paper, and which has already been noticed as the authority for supposing that Caxton learned printing at Cologne; the *Boke of St. Albans*, the *Chronicles of England*, *Morte D'Arthur*, *The Canterbury*

---

\* It is hardly necessary to remind the reader that at this period Westminster was quite distinct from London.

de of twelue / the thyrd of eyght / the  
fourth of .ix. as this fygure sheweth.



¶ When these  
accordes were  
founden Pytago  
ras gaf hem na  
mes. And so þ  
he called in nõ  
bre double / he  
called in son  
nes Dyapason  
And þ he called  
in nõbre other  
halfe he called  
in sonne Dya  
pente. And þ þ  
in nõbre is cal  
led all & þ thyr

de dele / hete in sonnes Dyatefferon / &  
that þ in nombres is called all & the  
eyghterth dele / hete in sonnes double

*Tales*, etc., etc. He also issued a host of sermons, almanacs, and other minor works.

In 1500 Wynkyn de Worde moved from Caxton's house in Westminster to the Sign of the Sun, in Fleet Street, and presently opened another place of business at the Sign of Our Lady of Pity, in St. Paul's Churchyard.

About a year after Caxton had established himself at the Red Pale, and had issued the *Dictes or Sayengis*, and two years before the city of London had attained to the dignity of a printing-press, typography began to be practised at Oxford, but by whom is not known, though very possibly by Theodore Rood of Cologne. The first Oxford Book was the *Expositio in Simbolum Apostolorum* of St. Jerome, a work which happens to be dated 1468, and has thereby led some to assign to Oxford the credit of having printed the first book in this country. But that date is now acknowledged to be a printer's error for 1478. A similar misprint led to a similar error as to the first book printed in Venice. The *Decor Puellarum*, executed by Nicolas Jensen, purports to have appeared in 1461, and thus was at one time supposed to be the first book printed in Venice, but the date is now recognised as a misprint for 1471, which leaves John of Spire the first Venetian printer and his *Epistolæ familiares* of Cicero, 1469, the first Venetian printed book.

Cambridge was more than forty years later than Oxford in providing herself with a printing-press.

In the same year that London began to print appeared the first books from the press at the Abbey of St. Albans, namely, *Augustini Dacti*

*elegancie*, and the *Nova Rhetorica* of Saona. As both were printed in 1480 it is uncertain which is the earlier. This press was probably started in 1479, but of the printer nothing is known, except that when Wynkyn de Worde reprinted the *Chronicles of England* from a copy printed at St. Albans, he refers to him as the St. Albans "scole mayster." The famous *Bokys of Haukyng and Huntynge, and also of Cootarmuris*, commonly known as the Book of St. Albans, written by the accomplished Juliana Berners, prioress of the neighbouring nunnery of Sopwell, was printed at the monastery in 1486, and reprinted ten years later by Wynkyn de Worde.

## CHAPTER XII.

### EARLY PRINTING IN SCOTLAND.

SCOTLAND was one of the last of the countries of Europe to appreciate the advantages of typography so far as to possess herself of a printing-press. She was also, as we have pointed out in a previous chapter, the only one, save England, and possibly Holland, to have the art of printing brought to her by one of her own sons and not by a foreigner.

The first Scottish printer was Andrew Myllar, an Edinburgh bookseller, who imported books from England and from France, and who, in the latter country, learned how to print. Two books are extant which were printed for him on the continent, probably at Rouen by Laurence Hostingue, and these are worth noticing. The first may

speak for itself, through its colophon, of which the following is a translation:—"The Book of certain 'Words Equivocal,' in alphabetical order, along with an interpretation in the English tongue,



Myllar's device.

has been happily finished. Which Andrew Myllar, a Scotsman, has been solicitous should be



printed, with admirable art and corrected with diligent care, both in orthographic style, according to the ability available, and cleared from obscurity. In the year of the Christian Redemption, One thousand five hundred and fifth." The second book is an *Expositio Sequentiarum*, or Book of Sequences, of the Salisbury use, printed in 1506.

In 1507 Myllar was taken into partnership by Walter Chepman, and fortified by a royal privilege these two set up the first Scottish printing-press, with plant and types and workmen brought by Myllar from France. Chepman furnished the capital and Myllar the knowledge. Their press was situated at the foot of Blackfriars Wynd in the Southgate in Edinburgh. The privilege sets forth that Myllar and Chepman have "at our instance and request, for our plesour, the honour and proffit of our Realme and Liegis, takin on thame to furnis and bring hame ane prent, with all stuff belangand tharto, and expert men to use the sammyn for imprenting within our Realme the bukis of our Lawis, actis of parliament, cronicles, mess bukis," etc.

It is believed that the favour and encouragement shown to Myllar and Chepman by the King was the result of the influence of William Elphinstone, Bishop of Aberdeen, who had prepared a Breviary, *Breviarum Aberdonense*, which he wished to be used by his countrymen to the exclusion of the Salisbury Missal, and that the real purpose of the promotion of the first printing-press in Scotland was the printing of this work. For the privilege goes on to say: "And alis it is divisit and thocht expedient be us and our consall, that in tyme cuming mess bukis, efter our awin scottis

use, and with legendis of Scottis sanctis, as is now gaderit and ekit be ane Reverend fader in God, and our traist consalour Williame bischope of abirdene and utheris, be usit generaly within al our Realme allsone as the sammyn may be imprentit and providet, and that na maner of sic bukis of Salusbery use be brocht to be sauld within our Realme in tym cuming." Anyone infringing this decree was to be punished and the books forfeited.

But the earliest work of the Southgate press consisted of literature of a lighter sort, and, when dated at all, is dated 1508, while the Breviary did not make its appearance till later. These early productions, which survive only in fragments, included *The Porteous of Noblenes*, *The Knightly Tale of Golagros and Gawane*, *Sir Eglamoure of Artoys*, *The Maying or Disport of Chaucer*, and several others. *The Maying or Disport of Chaucer* is the most perfect specimen remaining, and its exact date can be ascertained from its colophon, which reads as follows:—

Heir endis the maying and disport of Chaacer.  
Impretit in the southgait of Edinburgh be  
Walter chepman and Andro B myllar the fourth  
day of apile the phere of God M.CCCCC. and  
viii yheris.

The *Maying and Disport* is better known as the *Complaynt of a Lover's Life*, or the *Complaynt of the Black Knight*.

Strange to say, we hear no more of Myllar after this. But Chepman comes forward again in connection with the Breviary (though it is

uncertain whether he was its printer), and probably printed some other books which have been lost. The Breviary is a small octavo in two volumes, the first of which appeared in 1509 and the other in 1510. It is printed in red and black Gothic characters. The conclusion of the Latin colophon to the second volume may be rendered as follows:—

“Printed in the town of Edinburgh, by the command and at the charge of the honourable gentleman Walter Chepman, merchant in the said town, on the fourth day of June in the year of our Lord 1510.”

The next Scottish printer, so far as is known, was a certain John Story, though only an *Office of Our Lady of Pity*, accompanied by a legend on the subject of the relics of St. Andrew, remains to testify to us of his existence. It was printed “by command of Charles Steele,” and Dr. Dickson dates it at (perhaps) about 1520.

Rather more than twenty years later, Thomas Davidson became King's Printer in Edinburgh. His only dated work was *The New Actis And Constitutionis of Parliament Maid Be The Ryght Excellent Prince James The Fift Kyng of Scottis* 1540. The title-page of this book consists of a large woodcut of the Scottish arms, above which is the title in four lines printed in Roman capitals. This book also displays all three forms of type—black letter, Roman, and Italic. Its colophon, which is printed in Italics, is as follows:

*Imprentit in Edinburgh, be Thomas Davidson, dwelling abone the nether bow, on the north syde of the gait, the aucht day of Februarii, the zeir of God, 1541. zeris.*

But there is some of Davidson's undated work

which is earlier than this, though it is not known for certain when he began to print. Of these undated publications, *Ad Serenissimum Scotorum Regem Iacobum Quintum de suscepto Regni Regimine a diis feliciter ominato Strena* is notable as affording the earliest example of the use of Roman type by a Scottish printer, for its title is printed in these characters. Only one copy is known, and that is in the British Museum. Opinions differ as to its date, but the majority assign it to the year 1528.

Davidson's most important production, however, was his beautiful folio edition of Bellenden's translation of Hector Boece's work, *The hystory and croniklis of Scotland*. This, says Dr. Dickson, is "an almost unrivalled specimen of early British typography. It is one of those gems which the earlier period of the art so frequently produced, but which no future efforts of the press have surpassed or even equalled." It has a title-page similar to that of the *Newv Actis*, but the title itself is printed in handsome red Gothic characters. Dr. Dickson, to whose learned *Annals of Scottish Printing* (completed, on account of the author's ill-health, by Mr. J. P. Edmond) I am indebted for the details of early Scottish typography given above, assigns this book to the year 1542.

Having seen the printing-press fairly set to work in Scotland, it will not be necessary here to notice its later productions. But before closing the chapter it will be interesting to observe that Edinburgh was the place of publication of the first work printed in the Gaelic language. This was Bishop Carswell's translation of the Scottish Prayer-Book, which was printed in 1567 by Roibeard (Robert) Lekprevik. It is in the

form of Gaelic common at that time to both Scotland and Ireland, and therefore as regards language it forestalls the *Irish Alphabet and Catechism*, Dublin, 1571, to which reference is made below. The type of Carswell's Prayer-Book, however, is Roman. The following is a translation of its title - page, made by Dr. M'Lauchlan :—

## FORMS OF

### PRAYER AND

administration of the sacraments and catechism of the Christian faith, here below. According as they are practised in the churches of Scotland which have loved and accepted the faithful gospel of God, on having put away the false faith, turned from the Latin and English into Gaelic by Mr. John Carswell Minister of the Church of God in the bounds of Argyll, whose other name is Bishop of the Isles.

No other foundation can any man lay save that which is laid even Jesus Christ.

1 Cor. 3.

Printed in dún Edin whose other name is Dún monaidh the 24th day of April 1567,  
By Roibeard Lekprevik.

Lekprevik, whose first work, so far as is known, was produced in 1561, printed not only in Edinburgh, but also in Stirling and St. Andrews, at different times.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## EARLY PRINTING IN IRELAND.

IN heading a chapter "Early Printing in Ireland," one is somewhat reminded of the celebrated chapter on snakes. As a matter of fact, however, there is no real analogy. Ireland was very slow to adopt the printing-press, and made little use of it when she did adopt it, yet it would not be quite accurate to say that there was no early printing in Ireland. But it can truthfully be said that Ireland's early printing was late—late, that is, compared with that of other countries.

The first typographical work known to have been produced in Ireland is the Book of Common Prayer—the First Prayer-Book of Edward VI.—which was printed in Dublin in 1551 by Humfrey Powell. Powell was a printer in Holborn Conduit in 1548, and in 1551 went to Dublin and set up as King's Printer. A "Proclamation . . . against the rebels of the O'Conors. . . . Imprynted at Dublin, by Humfrey Powell, 16th August, 1564," seems to be the only other known specimen of his Dublin printing.

The colophon of the first book printed on Irish ground is as follows:—

**Imprinted by Humfrey Powell, Printer to the  
Kynge's Maiestie, in his hyghnesse realme of  
Ireland, dwelling in the citee of Dublin in the  
great toure by the Crane.**

*Cum priuilegio ad imprimendum solum*

ANNO DOMINI

M.D.LI.

This Prayer-Book is exceedingly rare. The British Museum possesses no copy, but has to content itself with photographs showing the title, colophon, etc., of that in the library of Trinity College, Dublin. Emanuel College, Cambridge, has one which formerly belonged to Archbishop Sancroft. Cotton, in his *Typographical Gazetteer*, says that Powell's Prayer-Book is most creditable to the early Irish press. It is in the English language, and printed in black letter.

The first book printed in the Gaelic language, though in Roman type, has already been spoken of. The first Gaelic type was exhibited to the world in a tiny volume of fifty-four pages printed at Dublin in 1571, and entitled *Irish Alphabet and Catechism*. This was compiled by John O'Kearney, and contained the elements of the Irish language, the Catechism, some prayers, and Archbishop Parker's articles of the Christian rule. Opposite is a facsimile of the title-page, which may be translated as follows:

#### IRISH ALPHABET AND CATECHISM.

Precept or instruction of a Christian, together with certain articles of the Christian rule, which are proper for everyone to adopt who would be submissive to the ordinance of God and of the Queen in this Kingdom; translated from Latin and English into Irish by John O'Kearney.

Awake, why sleepest thou, O Lord?  
Arise, cast us not off for ever.

Ps. xliv. ver. 23.

---

Printed in Irish in the town of the Ford of the Hurdles, at the cost of Master John Usher,





alderman, at the head of the Bridge, the 20th day of June 1571.

With the privilege of the great Queen.

---

1571

This book was produced by John O'Kearney, sometime treasurer of St. Patrick's Cathedral, and his friend Nicholas Walsh, chancellor of St. Patrick's and afterwards Bishop of Ossory, and the John Usher who defrayed the expense was then Collector of Customs of the port of Dublin. Its appearance was considered a momentous event by those concerned with it, for great benefits were anticipated for the Irish people as soon as "their national tongue and its own dear alphabet" was reduced to print, as O'Kearney states at some length in the preface. He also tells us that the types from which this volume was printed were provided "at the cost of the high, pious, great, and mighty prince Elizabeth."

In this connection it is worth while to notice two extant records, one among the State Papers (Irish Series) and the other among the Acts of the Privy Council. From the first, made some time in December 1567, we gather that Queen Elizabeth had already paid £66. 13s. 4d. "for the making of carecters for the testament in irishe," and that this Testament was not yet in the press. The second (August 1587) states that the New Testament was translated into Irish by Walsh and O'Kearney, but "never imprynted, partlie for want of proper characters and men of that nacion and language skillful in the mystery of pryntyng," and partly on account of the cost.

I can find no other record of the provision of

a fount of Irish types at the Queen's expense, and having no more definite information at hand on this point, and taking into consideration the contents of the book—an Irish alphabet, and directions for reading Irish, and a catechism, etc. (by way of exercise?)—its diminutive size and the imperfection of its print, I venture the suggestion that O'Kearney's work was printed as a trial of the new types given by the Queen and intended for printing the New Testament. This view is supported by the first words of the preface: "Here, O reader, you have the first value and fruit of that great instructive work, which I have been producing and devising for you for a long time, that is, the faithful and perfect type of the Gaelic tongue." The conclusion seems to be that the types were inadequate for the larger work, and that for some reason there was a difficulty about supplying more or finding anyone to undertake the printing.

The preface further says, after requesting corrections and amendments as regards the typography: "And it is not alone that I am asking you to give this kind friendly correction to the printing, but also to the translation or rendering made of this catechism put forth as far back as 1563 of the age of the Lord and [which] is now more correct and complete, with the principal articles of the Christian faith associated therewith." This has led some to think that there was an earlier edition of the *Alphabet and Catechism*. But it seems plain that O'Kearney refers to the Catechism only, not to the whole book, and equally plain that the 1563 work, whatever it was, was not printed in Irish type, or there would have been no special occasion to glorify the 1571

*Alphabet and Catechism*. Since nothing is known of the *Catechism* of 1563, it is very possible that it existed only in manuscript and never went to press.

I have gone into this matter of the *Irish Alphabet and Catechism* of 1571 somewhat at length, because I am not aware that it has ever yet received detailed attention. The quotations I have given from the preface are from an anonymous manuscript translation inserted in the British Museum copy.

O'Kearney's *Irish Alphabet and Catechism* is so rare that only three copies are known to exist: one being in the British Museum, one in the Bodleian Library, and one in the library of Lincoln Cathedral. The fount of types from which it was printed was not quite correct; for instance, the small Roman "a" is used, and an "H" is introduced, a letter foreign to the Gaelic alphabet.

During the seventeenth century, and even later, most of the Irish books were sent to be printed on the continent or in England. Several books by Irish authors, chiefly catechisms, works on the language, and dictionaries, bear the names of Louvain, Antwerp, Rome or Paris, such as the *Catechism* of Bonaventure Hussey, printed at Louvain in 1608, and reprinted at Antwerp in 1611 and 1618.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### BOOK BINDINGS.

A BOOK as we know it is usually contained in a case or cover intended primarily for its protection. The fastening together of the different

sections of the book, and the providing it with a cover, and, incidentally, the decoration of that cover, come under the head of bookbinding, or bibliopeggy, as the learned call it. The process of binding consists of two parts: first, the arrangement of the leaves and sections in proper order, their preparation for sewing by beating or pressing, the stitching of them together, and the fastening of them into the cover. This is called "forwarding." The other half of the work is the lettering and decoration of the cover, and is called "finishing." With the decoration of the cover only can we concern ourselves here.

The art of binding books is far older than the art of printing. The first known attempt to provide a cover by way of protection for a document was made by the workman who devised a clay case for the clay tablet-books of Babylonia, but this is as far from our notion of bookbinding as the tablets themselves are from our notion of books. Nor do the Roman bindings, which consisted of coloured parchment wrappers, come much nearer the modern conception. The ivory cases of the double-folding wax tablets or diptychs, too, of the second and third centuries, A.D., are also outside the pale, strictly speaking, but they deserve mention on account of the beautiful carving with which they are decorated, and on which some of the finest Byzantine art was expended.

One of the earliest bookbinders or book-cover decorators whose name has come down to us was Dagæus, an Irish monk, and a clever worker in metals. Among the many beautiful objects in metal wrought in the old Irish monasteries were skilfully designed covers and clasps for the

books which were so highly prized in the "Isle of Saints." Nor were covers alone deemed sufficient protection from wear and tear. Satchels, or polaires, such as that mentioned in Adamnan's story of the miraculous preservation of St. Columba's Hymn-book, were in common use for conveying books from place to place. Very few specimens now remain, but there is one at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge, containing an Irish missal, and another, which is preserved at Trinity College, Dublin, together with the *Book of Armagh*, to which it belongs, is thus described by the Rev. T. K. Abbott, in the *Book of Trinity College* :—

"An interesting object connected with the *Book of Armagh* is its leather satchel, finely embossed with figures of animals and interlaced work. It is formed of a single piece of leather, 36 in. long and  $12\frac{1}{2}$  broad, folded so as to make a flat-sided pouch, 12 in. high,  $12\frac{3}{4}$  broad, and  $2\frac{1}{4}$  deep. Part of it is doubled over to make a flap, in which are eight brass-bound slits, corresponding to as many brass loops projecting from the case, in which ran two rods, meeting in the middle, where they were secured by a lock in early times. In Irish monastic libraries, books were kept in such satchels, which were suspended by straps from hooks in the wall. Thus it is related in an old legend that "on the night of Longaradh's death all the book-satchels in Ireland fell down."

In Ireland, too, specially valuable volumes were enclosed in a book-shrine, or cumhdach; and although, like the satchels, these cumhdachs are not bindings in the proper sense of the word, yet since they were intended for the same pur-

pose as bindings, that is, the protection of the book, it will not be out of place to speak of them here.

The use of bookshrines in Ireland was very possibly the survival of an early custom of the primitive Church. It seems to have been applied chiefly, if not always, to books too precious or sacred to be read. We are told that a Psalter belonging to the O'Donels was fastened up in a case that was not to be opened; and were it ever unclosed, deaths and disasters would ensue to the clan. If borne by a priest of unblemished character thrice round their troops before a battle, it was believed to have the power of granting them victory, provided their cause were a righteous one.

Cumhdachs were also used in Scotland, but no Scottish examples have survived. The oldest cumhdach now existing is one in the Museum of the Royal Irish Academy, which was made for the MS. known as Molaise's Gospels, at the beginning of the eleventh century. It is of bronze, and ornamented with silver plates bearing gilt patterns. Another book-shrine, made for the Stowe Missal a little later, is of oak, covered with silver plates, and decorated with a large oval crystal in the middle of one side. The Book of Kells once had a golden cumhdach, we are told, or, more correctly, perhaps, a cumhdach covered with gold plates; but when the book was stolen from the church of Kells in 1006 it was despoiled of its costly case, with which the robbers made off, leaving the most precious part of their booty, the book itself, lying on the ground hidden by a sod.

One of the earliest bookbinders in England



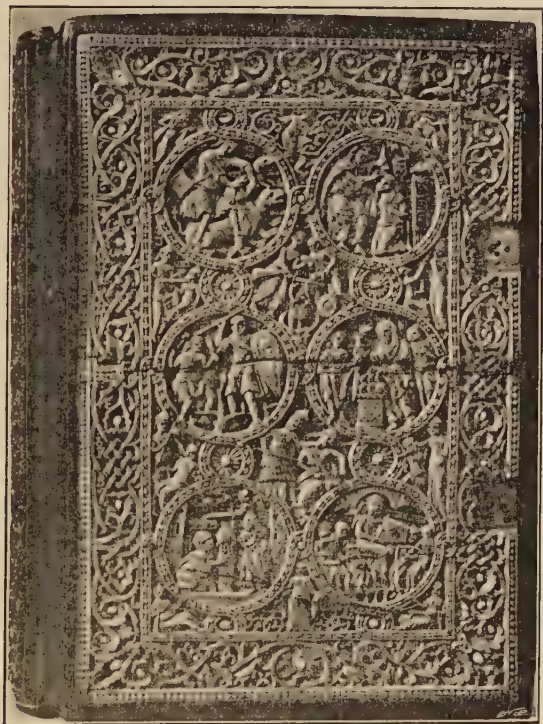
was a bishop, Ethilwold of Lindisfarne, who bound the great Book of the Gospels that his predecessor Eadfrid had written. For the same book Billfrið the anchorite made a beautiful metal cover, gilded and bejewelled. The Lindisfarne Gospels still exists, but the cover which now contains it, though costly, is quite new. Like most ancient book covers the original one has been lost, or destroyed for the sake of its valuable material.

Among the earlier mediæval bindings those of the Byzantine school of art rank very high. They were exceedingly splendid, for gold was their prevailing feature, and jewels and enamel were also lavished upon them.

The ordinary books of the middle ages were usually bound in substantial oak boards covered with leather, and often having clasps, corners, and protecting bosses of metal. In the twelfth century the English leather bindings produced at London, Winchester, Durham and other centres, were pre-eminent. Miss Prideaux instances some books which were bound for Bishop Pudsey, and which are now in the cathedral library of Durham, as "perhaps the finest monuments of this class of work in existence." The sides of these volumes are blind-tooled; that is, the designs are impressed by means of dies or tools with various patterns and representations of men and of fabulous creatures, but not gilded.

Certain volumes, however, were treated with particular honour, either at the expense of a wealthy and book-loving owner, or for the purpose of presentation to some great personage, and for these sumptuous bindings the materials employed were various and costly. A Latin

psalter which was written for Melissenda, wife of Fulk, Count of Anjou and King of Jerusalem, has a very wonderful French binding. The covers



Upper cover of Melissenda's Psalter.

are of wood, and each bears a series of delicate ivory carvings of Byzantine work. An upper

cover shows incidents in the life of David, and symbolical figures, and the lower cover scenes representing the works of Mercy, with figures of birds and animals. Rubies and turquoises dotted here and there help to beautify the ivory. This book is in the British Museum.

Another specimen in the same collection may be taken as an example of the use of enamel as a decoration for bindings. This is a Latin manuscript of the Gospels of SS. Luke and John, which is enclosed in wooden boards bound in red leather. In the upper cover is a sunk panel of Limoges enamel on copper gilt, representing Christ in glory. The work is of the thirteenth century. These enamelled bindings were often additionally decorated with gold and jewels.

A curious little modification of the ordinary leather binding was sometimes made in the case of small devotional works. The leather of the back and sides was continued at the bottom in a long tapering slip, at the end of which was a kind of button, so that the book might be fastened to the dress or girdle. Slender chains were often used for the same purpose.

About the time of the invention of printing, leather bindings began to be decorated with gold tooling. Tooling is the name given to the designs impressed upon the leather with various small dies so manipulated as to make a connected pattern. When the impressions are gilded the dull leather is brightened and beautified in proportion to the skill and taste expended by the workman. The art of gold tooling is believed to have originated in the East, and to have been brought to Italy by Venetian traders, or, as it

has also been suggested, through the manuscripts which were dispersed at the fall of Constantinople. In any case, it was in Italy that it was first adopted and brought to perfection, and other European countries learned the art from Italian craftsmen. Chief among the early Italian gilt bindings are those made of the finest leathers and inscribed *THO. MAIOLI ET AMICORVM*. Nothing whatever is known of Thomasso Maioli, except that he had a large library and spared no expense in clothing his books in bibliopegic purple and fine linen.

What Maioli appears to have been among Italian book-collectors, Jean Grolier, Viscomte d'Aguisy, was among French bibliophiles. He held for a time the post of Treasurer of the Duchy of Milan, and while in Italy he collected books for his library and made the acquaintance of Aldus Manutius. Many of the Aldine books are dedicated to him, for Aldus occasionally stood in need of financial aid and found in Grolier a generous and practical patron of literature. Some of the famous bindings which distinguish Grolier's books were executed in Italy, others in France, where Italian bookbinders were then teaching their art to the native workmen. They display the same style of design that decorates the books of Maioli, and Maioli's benevolent inscription too, Grolier adapted to his own use, and stamped upon certain of his books *IO. GROLIERII ET AMICORVM*. The exact signification of these words is obscure. At first sight they might appear to refer delicately to the joy with which the owner of the book would place it at the disposal of his friends, but this does not accord with what is known of the char-

acter of book-lovers. Perhaps their only meaning is that Maioli and Grolier were at all times ready to please their friends and to gratify themselves by exhibiting their treasures. But since several copies of the same work are known to have been bound for Grolier—for instance, five copies of the Aldine Virgil—it has been suggested that he occasionally made presents of his books, though he drew the line at lending them.

Grolier's copy of the *De Medicina* of Celsus, which is in the British Museum, is bound in a somewhat different style from that usually associated with his name. It is in brown leather; blind-tooled except for some gold and coloured roundels in different parts of the device. In the centre of both covers is a medallion in colours, that on the upper cover representing Curtius leaping into the abyss in the Forum, and that on the lower cover representing the defence of the bridge by Horatius. This is an Italian binding.

Although it was Italy who first improved upon the usual methods of mediæval binding, and from her that France took lessons in this new and better way of clothing books, it was France who was destined to bring the art to its highest excellence. Having learned her lesson, she perfected herself in it, and the workmen of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, such as Geoffroy Tory, Nicholas Clovis, and Robert Eve, and Le Gascon, carried French bookbinding into the very first rank, where it may be considered to remain to this day.

Some of the finest French examples extant are those which were executed for Henry II. and Diana of Poitiers, Duchess of Valentinois. Both were ardent bibliophiles, and both indulged in

very sumptuous bindings for their books. Some of the chief treasures in our great libraries to-day are the beautiful volumes which Henry presented to the duchess, and which are ornamented with the royal lilies of France, accompanied by the bows and arrows and crescents which were Diana's own badges and the initials of the king and the duchess.

Catherine de Medicis also was an enthusiastic book collector, which may surprise those who think that a person who is devoted to books is necessarily harmless. Some of her books she brought to France as part of her dowry, others she acquired by fair means or foul as was most convenient, and to their bindings she paid particular attention and kept a staff of bookbinders in her employ.

To such a pitch of extravagance did the bibliophiles of the period go in the binding of their books, that in 1583 Henry III. of France decreed that ordinary citizens should not use more than four diamonds to the decoration of one book, and the nobility not more than five. The king himself, however, was as extravagant as any of his subjects, at any rate as regards the designs he favoured. Many of his books are clad in black morocco, bearing representations of skulls, cross-bones, tears, and other melancholy emblems. He developed his taste for these strange decorations when, as Duke of Anjou, he loved and lost Mary of Clèves.

The early printers at first executed their own bookbinding, but presently left it to the stationers. It was generally only the larger works which they thought worth covering, and the small ones were simply stitched. Antony Koburger, of whom

mention has already been made, bound his own books and ornamented them in a style peculiarly his own. Caxton bound his according to the prevailing fashion, with leather sides, plain or blind-tooled with diagonal lines, forming diamond-shaped compartments in each of which is stamped a species of dragon.

About the sixteenth century it became fashionable to have one's books

“ Full goodly bound in pleasant coverture  
Of damask, satin, or else of velvet pure,”

as a writer of the time expresses it, and this style naturally lent itself to the needleworked decoration. This decoration was especially favoured in England, and the ladies of the period executed some very fine pieces of embroidery as “pleasant covertures” for their books, using coloured silks and gold and silver thread on velvet or other material. One of the earliest embroidered bindings covers a description of the Holy Land, written by Martin Brion, and dedicated to Henry VIII. It is of crimson velvet, with the English arms enclosed in the Garter, between two H's, and the Tudor rose in each corner, and it is worked in silks, gold thread and seed pearls. Queen Elizabeth is said to have preferred embroidered bindings to those of leather, and to have been very skilful in working them. The copy of *De Antiquitate Britannicæ Ecclesiæ*, which the author, Archbishop Parker, presented to the Queen, has a cover which is very elaborately embroidered indeed. It is of contemporary English work, and is thus described in the British Museum *Guide to the Printed Books exhibited in the King's Library*:—



“Green velvet, having as a border a representation of the paling of a deer park, embroidered in gold and silver thread; the border on the upper cover enclosing a rose bush bearing red and white roses, surrounded by various other flowers, and by deer; the lower cover has a similar border, but contains deer, snakes, plants and flowers; the whole being executed in gold and silver thread and coloured silks. On the back are embroidered red and white roses.” Embroidered bindings remained in fashion during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and plain velvet, too, was often used, sometimes with gold or silver mounts.

The old Royal Library, which was given to the nation by George II., contains a large number of sumptuous bookbindings; and that English rulers were not unmindful of the welfare of their literary treasures may also be gathered from various entries in the Wardrobe Books and from other documents. Thus, we read that Edward IV. paid Alice Clavers, “for the makynge of xvj. laces and xvj. tassels for the garnyssing of divers of the kinge’s bookes ijs. viijd.”; and “Piers’ Bauduyn, stacioner, for bynding gilding and dressing of a booke called *Titus Livius* xxs., for binding gilding and dressing of a booke of the *The Holy Trinity* xvjs.,” and so on. Again, in the bill delivered to Henry VIII. by Thomas Berthelet, his majesty’s printer and binder, are found such entries as these:—

“Item delyvered to the kinge’s hyghnes the vj. day of January a Psalter in englishe and latine covered with crimoyssyn satyne, 2s.”

“Item delyvered to the kinge’s hyghes for a little Psalter, takynge out of one booke and setting



in an other in the same place, and for gorgeous binding of the same booke xijd.; and to the Goldesmythe for taking off the claspes and corners and for setting on the same ageyne xvjd."

Among the various styles which may be classed as fancy bindings may be instanced the seventeenth century tortoise-shell covers with silver mounts and ornaments, which have a very handsome effect, and the mosaic decoration of the same period. This mosaic decoration was made by inlaying minute pieces of differently coloured leathers, and finishing them with gold tooling. It was work which called for great dexterity in manipulation, and in skilful hands the result was very pretty and graceful.

Even from this slight sketch it will be seen that bookbindings have always presented unlimited opportunities for originality on the part of the worker, as regards both design and material. Wood and leather, gold and silver, ivory and precious stones, coloured enamels, impressed papier-mâché, gold-tooled leather and embroidered fabric, pasteboard and parchment, have all been pressed into the service, and the subject of bookbindings is a fascinating branch of book history. But from their nature bindings are difficult to describe in an interesting manner, and words can hardly do justice to them without the aid of facsimile illustrations.

The ordinary bindings of to-day are practically confined to two styles, the cloth and the leather, and those combinations of leather and cloth or leather and paper which make the covers of half-bound and quarter-bound volumes. Cloth binding, the binding of the nineteenth century, is an English invention, and

came into use in 1823. On the Continent books are still issued in paper covers and badly stitched, on the assumption that if worth binding at all, they will be bound by the purchaser as he pleases. But although the English commercial cloth binding is often charged for far too highly, no one can deny its convenience, and its superiority over the paper undress of foreign works. Moreover, it is the homely, everyday garb of the great majority of our favourite volumes, and though, no doubt, it is delightful to possess books sumptuously bound, book-lovers of less ambition, or of lighter purses than those who can command such luxuries, are not very much to be pitied. There is something characteristic about a book in a cloth cover which it loses when it dons the livery of its owner's library. Cloth is not only more varied in texture, but admits of greater freedom and variety of design than does leather, so there is something to be said in its favour in spite of the contention that direct handicraft is preferable to handicraft which works through a machine, and that one of a batch of bindings printed by the thousand is not to be compared with a single specimen of tooled leather which has cost a pair of human hands hours of careful toil. The little libraries with which so many of us have to be contented owe their bright and cheerful appearance to the cloth covers of the books, in which each book stands out with modest directness, wearing its individuality instead of losing it in a crowd of neighbours dressed exactly like itself. In a series uniformly bound, however, a family likeness is not only admissible, but pleasing. It gives an idea of unison among, perhaps, widely differing individuals. But the

unison which is becoming to a family makes a community monotonous.

On the other hand, something stronger than cloth is necessary when books are to be subjected to special wear and tear, and desirable when a volume is to be particularly honoured or when the library it is to enter is large and important. Protection is the first purpose of a binding, and endurance its first quality, and the experience of centuries has shown that the walls in the fairy-tale were right when they said,

“Gilding will fade in damp weather,  
To endure, there is nothing like LEATHER.”

In which, perhaps, the book-lover will see a parable. For, after all, the book is the thing, and the cover a mere circumstance, and those who wish to make books merely pegs to hang bindings upon deserve to have no books at all. Yet it is right that though the binding should not be raised above the book, it should be worthy of the book, and much of the cheap and good literature which is now within the reach of all who care to stretch out their hands for it, is clothed in a manner to which no exception can be taken on any score. Those who have not realised how charming some of the modern bookbindings can be, should consult the winter number of *The Studio* for 1899-1900.

## CHAPTER XV.

## HOW A MODERN BOOK IS PRODUCED.

A DESCRIPTION of the methods by which a modern book is produced has to begin at the second stage of the proceedings. The processes of the first stage, including the writing of the book and the arrangements between the publisher and the author, differ, of course, in individual cases. The processes of the second stage, however, are common to a large proportion of the books produced at the present day, though it will be easily understood that they can be dealt with but summarily in this chapter, and that as regards detail much variation is possible.

The second stage in the history of a modern book may be said to begin with the overhauling which the manuscript receives at the hands of the printer's "Reader," who goes over it with the view of instructing the compositor regarding capitals, punctuation, chapter headings and other details. Although these are considered minor and merely clerical details which are frequently neglected or misused in writing, it is essential that they be carefully attended to in print. Many examples can be given of amusing misprints and alterations of meaning caused by even such a trifle as the misplacing of a comma. When this overhauling is completed the manuscript is ready to be sent to the composing room where the types are set up.

From experience the printer knows that many authors get a very different impression of their matter when they see it in type from what they

had when they read it in manuscript, and it frequently happens that alterations on proof are very numerous in consequence. When either from this or any other cause numerous alterations are anticipated, the matter is first set up in long slips called "galleys," and not put at once into page form. As soon as a few of those galleys are composed an impression called a "proof" is taken from the types so set, and this proof is passed to a reader whose duty is to see that a correct copy is made of the manuscript, and that the spelling is accurate and the punctuation good. This is a work commanding considerable intelligence and experience, as the number of types required for a printed page is very great, and even the most expert compositor cannot avoid mistakes. This marked proof is returned to the compositor to make the necessary corrections. Fresh proofs are got till no further errors are detected, when a final proof is pulled and sent to the author, who makes such alterations as he may desire.

When the corrected proofs are returned by the author they are given to the compositor, who makes the required alterations in the type. After this a revised proof is submitted. When the author is satisfied that the reading is as he wishes he returns the proofs, and the galleys are now made into page form. If it is not expected that the author will make many changes the types are arranged in page shape before any proofs are shown to him, and the work goes through somewhat more quickly.

When the types are divided into pages they are placed in sets or "formes," each forme being secured in an iron frame called a "chase," which

can be conveniently moved about. Each chase is of a size to enclose as many pages as will cover one side of the sheet of paper to be used in printing. Fifty years ago only one or two sizes of paper were made, and the size of sheet generally used for books was that which allowed eight pages of library size on one side, hence called "octavo" size, or when folded another way allowed twelve pages, hence "twelvemo" or "duodecimo." Other sizes occasionally used are called "sixteenmo" or "sixtodecimo," "eighteenmo" or "octodecimo," etc.

With larger sized printing machines now driven by steam or electricity, there is greater variety in the size of formes and papers used in printing. In all cases, however, the number of pages laid down for one side of paper must divide by four. The pages are set in the chase in special positions, so that when the sheet is printed on both sides and folded over and over for binding they will appear in proper sequence.

When only a small edition of a book is wanted the printing is generally done direct from the types, but when a large number of copies is required or frequent editions are expected, stereotype or electrotype plates are made. By this means the types are released for further use and other advantages obtained.

Stereotype plates are cakes of white metal carrying merely the face of the types, and were formerly made by taking from the types a mould of plaster of Paris. They are now formed by beating or pressing a prepared pulp of papier-mâché into the face of the lettering. The mould thus obtained is dried and hardened by heat, then molten metal is run into it of requisite thick-

ness. This plate after being properly dressed is fitted on a block equal in height to the type stem, and takes the place in the frame or chase that would have been occupied by the types.

The process of stereotyping is fairly quick and economical, but electrotypes are better suited for higher class work and are much more durable. In this process an impression is taken from the type on a surface of wax heated to the necessary degree of plasticity. When the wax mould has cooled and hardened it is placed in a galvanic current, where a thin coat of copper is deposited on its face. This coat is then detached from the mould and backed with white metal to give it the requisite body and stiffness and the electrotype is now, like the stereotype, a metal plate which can be fixed on a block and secured in a frame ready for the printing machine.

It is outside the scope of this work to describe minutely the marvellous machinery used in printing. It is interesting to know that the first printers had no machine but a screw handpress by which they laboriously worked off their books page by page, and that even so late as the middle of the nineteenth century all books with scarcely an exception were printed at handpresses which enabled two men to throw off about two hundred and fifty copies of a comparatively small-sized sheet in the hour. Now the machines commonly in use, attended by only a man and a lad, throw off from a thousand to fifteen hundred copies in an hour of a sheet four or even eight times the size.

Books are almost universally printed on what is called the flat-bed machine, so-called because the types or plates are placed on an iron table



which with them travels to and fro under a series of revolving rollers constantly being fed with a supply of ink which they transfer to the types or plates. Immediately these get beyond the inking rollers they pass under a revolving cylinder with a set of grippers attached, which open and shut with each revolution. These grippers receive the sheet of paper and carry it round with the cylinder. When it comes in contact with the types or plates travelling underneath, the impression or print is made. Some machines complete the printing of the sheet on both sides at one operation. In others the sheet is reversed and is printed on the other side by passing through a second time. In either case the sheet forms only a section of a book; the complete volume is made up of a number of these sections, folded and collated in proper order in the binding. There they are sewn together and fixed in the case or cover.

For illustrated books the pictures were formerly produced by engraving on wood, but they are now chiefly photographed from the artist's drawing on a light sensitive film spread on a metal plate, and etched in by acids. In whatever way produced, when printed with the text they are always relief blocks which are placed in proper position in the chase alongside the types or plates. Coloured illustrations are produced by successive printings. Special illustrations are frequently produced separately by other processes and inserted in the volume by the binder.

Machines of a different construction, such as the rotary press, and capable of a very much higher rate of production, are in use for printing newspapers and periodicals with a large circula-

tion, but these do not properly come into consideration when telling how a modern book is made.

[*This chapter has been kindly contributed.*  
G. B. R.]

---

### AUTHOR'S POSTSCRIPT.

In our endeavour to note the chief points in the history of books, and in considering the manifold interests which are bound up with their bodies, we have had to neglect their minds. To have tried even to touch upon the vast subject of literature in our story would have been as futile as an attempt to transport the ocean in a thimble. For literature consists of all that is transferable of human knowledge and experience, all that is expressible of human thought on whatever matter in heaven or earth has been dreamed of in man's philosophy. And though our aggregate of knowledge be small, it is vastly beyond the comprehension of one individual being.

Of the influence of books, and their manifold uses, also, this is not the place to speak. Moreover, even had the theme been unheeded by abler pens, no one who loves books needs to be told to how many magic portals they are the keys, while he who loves them not would not understand for all the telling in the world.

## INDEX.

---

### A.

Aberdeen Breviary, 126, 127.  
 Advertisements, early booksellers,  
     100.  
 Alcuin, 60.  
 Aldus Manutius, 99, 107, 109, 143.  
 Aleria, Bp. of, 99.  
 Alexandria, 16, 29, 143.  
 Alost, 110.  
 Alphabet, the, 10.  
 Amsterdam, 112.  
 Antiquarii, 47.  
 Antwerp, 136.  
 Arabs, the, 12.  
 Assyria, 12, 13, 28.  
 Assyrians, 11.  
 Augsburg, 98.  
 Aungervyle, R. (See RICHARD DE  
     BURY.)  
 Ave Maria Lane, 49.  
 Avignon, 80.

### B.

Babylonia, 12, 28, 137.  
 Babylonians, 11.  
 Bamberg, 71, 90, 98.  
 Basle, 98.  
 Benedict, Biscop, 59.  
 Beowulf, 24.  
 Berthelet, Thomas, 147.  
 Bible, the, 17.  
     — Mazarin or Gutenberg, 89, 94.  
     — thirty-six-line, 92.  
     — Mentz, 1462, 97.  
 Biblia Pauperum, 70, 73, 84.  
 Bibliothèque Nationale, 63, 64.  
 Bindings, 136, 150.  
 Block-books, 70, 76.  
 Block-printing, 67.  
 Bonhomme, Pasquier, 110.  
 Book of Durrow, 37.

Book of Kells, 37, 39.  
     — St. Albans, 24, 121, 124.  
     — St. Cuthbert. (See LINDIS-  
         FARNE GOSPELS.)  
 Book, production of modern, 151.  
 Bookbinding, 137-150.  
 Books, adventures of, 137.  
     — beginning of, 10.  
     — chained, 55, 66.  
     — heretical, 22.  
     — in classical times, 25.  
     — in monasteries, 20-23, 44, 137.  
     — not to be destroyed, 21.  
     — ornamenting of, 35.  
     — prices of, 47, 51.  
     — sizes of, 153.  
 Booksellers, 27, 28, 48-51.  
 Bordesley, Abbey, 65.  
 Breslau, 98.  
 Brethren of the Common Life, 111.  
 Breviary, Aberdeen, 126, 127.  
 Bruges, 49, 98, 110, 111, 113-115.  
 Brussels, 111.  
 "Brussels" Print, 69.  
 Byzantium, 17, 32.

### C.

Caedmon, 24.  
 Cambridge, 55, 123, 132, 138.  
 Campanus, 99, 103.  
 Canterbury, 42, 57, 59.  
 Carrells, 54.  
 Carswell's Prayer-book, 130.  
 Catalogues, early booksellers', 99,  
     — monastic library, 55-58.  
 Catechism, Irish Alphabet and, 130,  
     132, 136.  
 Caxton, 82, 99-102, 110-120, 121, 146.  
 Censorship, Ecclesiastical, 51, 52.  
     — University, 51.  
 Chelsea, 66.  
 Chepman, Walter, 126.

China, 14, 67, 77.  
 Clairvaux Abbey, 54.  
 Clement of Padua, 105.  
 Clugni, Abbey of, 57.  
 Cologne, 98, 114, 115.  
 Colophons, 102.  
 Copyists, 26, 27, 29, 31, 47-49.  
 Copyright, 27.  
 Corvey, Abbot of, 62.  
 Coster, Laurenz, 76, 78-84.  
 Cranz, Martin, 109.  
 Creed Lane, 49.  
 Cumhdachs, 138, 139.

## D.

Davidson, Thomas, 128.  
 Dictes or Sayengis, 116, 119.  
 Diemudis, 46.  
 Donatus, 73, 74, 106.  
 Dorchester, 47.  
 Dublin, 104, 130-132, 134, 138.  
 Durham, 42, 57, 140.

## E.

Edinburgh, 104, 124, 126, 128-130.  
 Egypt, 12, 13, 18-20, 27-30, 67.  
 Electrotype plates, printing from, 154.  
 Elizabeth, Queen, 119, 134, 135, 146.  
 Elzevirs, the, 111, 112.  
 England, 22, 35, 98-100, 112.

## F.

Faust or Fust, 84, 88, 94-97.  
 Fichet, Guillaume, 109.  
 Florence, 98.  
 Fountains Abbey, 54.  
 France, 22, 73, 74, 98, 109, 124, 126, 143, 144.  
 Friburger, Michael, 109.

## G.

Game and playe of the Chesse, 115, 117.  
 Gering, Ulric, 109.  
 Germany, 22, 62, 68, 73, 79, 98, 100, 110.  
 Glastonbury Abbey, 57.  
 Gloucester, 55.  
 Greece, 12, 14, 17-19, 22, 29.  
 Greeks, the, 11.  
 Grolier, Jean, 143, 144.

Guild of St. John the Evangelist, 49.  
 Gutenberg, 78-81, 84-96.

## H.

Haarlem, 76-78, 81-83, 110.  
 Hahn, Ulrich, 99, 103, 106.  
 Herculaneum, 17.  
 Hereford Cathedral, 66.  
 Holborn, 121, 131.  
 Holland, 71, 73, 76, 79, 84, 99, 110, 113, 121, 124.  
 Hostingue, Laurence, 124.

## I.

Illuminators, 46, 48, 49.  
 Ireland, 35, 36, 37, 99, 131, 138.  
 Irish Alphabet and Catechism, 130, 132-136.  
 Italy, 22, 23, 34, 73, 99, 100, 104-107, 142, 143.  
 Italic type, 107.

## J.

Japan, 67, 77.  
 Jenson, Nicolas, 102, 107, 123.  
 Junius, Hadrian, 83.

## K.

Kelmscott press, 76.  
 Ketelaer, Nycolaum, 110.  
 Kirkstall Abbey, 54.  
 Klosterneuberg, 71.  
 Koburger, Antony, 100, 145.

## L.

Lanfranc, 44.  
 Latin document, earliest, 14.  
 Latin names of towns, 103.  
 Leempt, Gerard de, 110.  
 Lettou, John, 120.  
 Leicester, 57.  
 Lekprevik, Roibeard, 129, 130.  
 Leland, 57.  
 Leyden, 111, 112.  
 Libraries, ancient, 27-34.  
 — collegiate, 55.  
 — monastic, 53-62.  
 Librarii, 16, 47.  
 Lignamine, J. P. de, 105.  
 Lindisfarne Gospels, 40-42, 140.  
 Lincoln Cathedral, 136.

Literature, Anglo-Saxon, 23  
 — beginning of, 13.  
 — of Greece, 14, 19.  
 Literatures, antique, 14.  
 London, 48, 49, 51, 98, 103, 104, 113,  
 121, 140.  
 Louvain, 110, 111, 136.  
 Lubeck, 98.  
 Lyons, 98, 109.

M.

Machlinia, William de, 103, 121.  
 Maioli, Thomasso, 143, 144.  
 Mansion, Colard, 110, 111, 114, 115.  
 Manuscript, oldest Biblical, 17.  
 — oldest Homeric, 17.  
 — oldest New Testament, 17, 20.  
 Manuscripts, Arabic, 20.  
 — Arabic-Spanish, 53.  
 — Byzantine, 36.  
 — Classical, 17, 20.  
 — Coptic, 20.  
 — of Four Gospels, 19.  
 — Greek, 14, 17.  
 — Hiberno-Saxon, 41.  
 — Illuminated, 35-44.  
 — Irish, 36-39, 42.  
 — Italian, 36.  
 — Moorish, 53.  
 — printed illustrations in, 69.  
 — Syriac, 20.  
 — Winchester, 43.  
 — of Virgil, 19.  
 Marienthal, 111.  
 Mentelin, John, 100.  
 Mentz, 78, 82-85, 87, 88, 90-92, 95,  
 96, 104, 111, 115.  
 Monasteries, books in, 20-23, 137,  
 138.  
 Monastic writing, 15, 19-21, 23, 44,  
 46, 47.  
 Morris, William, 76.  
 Musical notes printed, 97, 121.  
 Myllar, Andrew, 124-127.

N.

Naples, 98.  
 Netley Abbey, 54.  
 New Testament, 17, 21.  
 Nineveh, 14.  
 Nuremberg, 98, 100, 111.

O.

O'Kearney, John, 132, 134-136.  
 Old Testament, 12, 14, 16.

Omar, Caliph, 31.  
 Oxford, 50, 55, 59, 60, 62, 98, 123.  
 Oxyrhynchus, 19.

P.

Paternoster Row, 49.  
 Palestine, 20.  
 Palimpsests, 23.  
 Pannartz. (See SWEYNHEIM.)  
 Papyrus, 12.  
 Paris, 50, 59, 71, 88, 98, 100, 101, 104,  
 136.  
 — Council of, 58.  
 Philobiblon, 15, 45.  
 Peterborough, 57.  
 Petrarch, 22, 64, 107.  
 Pfister, Albrecht, 90.  
 Poggio Bracciolini, 22.  
 Powell, Humfrey, 137.  
 Printed illustrations in MSS., 69.  
 Printers as editors and publishers,  
 99.  
 — as booksellers, 99,  
 — as bookbinders, 145.  
 Printing, 11, 67-136.  
 — in colours, 97.  
 — machines for, 153-155.  
 Psalter, Melissanda's, 141, 142.  
 — Mentz, 1457, 97.  
 — Queen Mary's, 43.  
 Publication, mediæval, 48.  
 Publishers, 48, 104.  
 Pye or Pica, 100.  
 Pynson, Richard, 102.

R.

"R" Printer, 101.  
 Ramsey Abbey, 57.  
 Reichenau Abbey, 57.  
 Richard de Bury, 22, 45, 47, 60, 61,  
 64.  
 Romans, 11.  
 Rome, 12, 14-19, 27, 98, 103, 105, 106.  
 Rood, Theodore, 123.  
 Rostock, 111.  
 Rouen, 100, 124.  
 Royal Library of England, 65, 147.  
 — of France, 64.

S.

Satchels or Polaires, 138.  
 Schœffer, Peter, 88, 89, 95, 96, 99.  
 Scandinavians, 11.  
 Scotland, 99, 124, 139.  
 Seraglio library, 33.

Sopwell, 124.  
 Spain, 22, 98.  
 Speculum Humanæ Salvationis, 74-  
   76, 83, 84, 87.  
 Spira, John de, 103, 106, 123.  
   — Vindelinius de, 104, 107.  
 Spires, 98.  
   — John of. (See SPIRA.)  
 St. Albans, 98, 123, 124.  
 St. Andrews, 130.  
 St. Boniface, 35.  
 St. Columba, 39, 40, 138.  
 "St. Christopher," Print, 68.  
 St. Gall, Abbey of, 22, 54, 57.  
 St. Paul's Cathedral, 49.  
 Stationers, 48, 145.  
   — Company of, 49.  
 Stereotype plates, printing from, 53.  
 Stirling, 130.  
 Story, John, 128.  
 Strasburg, 85-88, 98, 100, 101, 104.  
 Subiaco, 98, 106.  
 Sweynheim and Pannartz, 98, 99,  
   101, 106.

## T.

Tablets, 11, 12, 137.  
 The Hague, 112.  
 Theodore, Abp., 42, 60.  
 Therhoernen, Arnold, 103, 104.  
 Tintern Abbey, 54.  
 Titchfield Abbey, 55, 56.  
 Title-page, 102-104.  
 Tooling, 142.  
 Type or Types, Aldino, 107, 108.  
   — Caxton's, 119.  
   — Early, 101.  
   — Gaelic or Irish, 132, 134-136.  
   — Gothic, 101, 109.

Type or Types, Greek, 98.  
   — Italic, 107.  
   — Moveable, 77-84.  
   — Roman, 101, 109.  
   — Subiaco, 105.  
   — Scottish printers', 128, 129.  
   — Wood and metal, 101.

## U.

Ulm, 98.  
 Usher, John, 132.  
 Utrecht, 110, 112.

## V.

Veldener, John, 110.  
 Venice, 64, 98, 102-104, 106, 107, 123.  
 Vienna, 71.  
 Virgil, Aldine, 108, 109, 144.

## W.

Waldfoghel, Procopius, 80.  
 Walsh, Nicholas, 134.  
 Westminster, 98, 111, 115-117, 121.  
 Whitby, 57.  
 Wimborne Minister, 66.  
 Winchester, 43, 47, 59, 140.  
 Woodcuts, early English, 117.  
 Worcester, 54.  
 Writers of Text Letter, 48.  
 Writing, 10, 11.  
 Wynkyn de Worde, 115, 121, 124.

## Z.

Zel, Ulric, 98.  
 Zutphen, 66.

(5)

THE END.









